

GREAT BRITAIN  
IN THE LATEST AGE  
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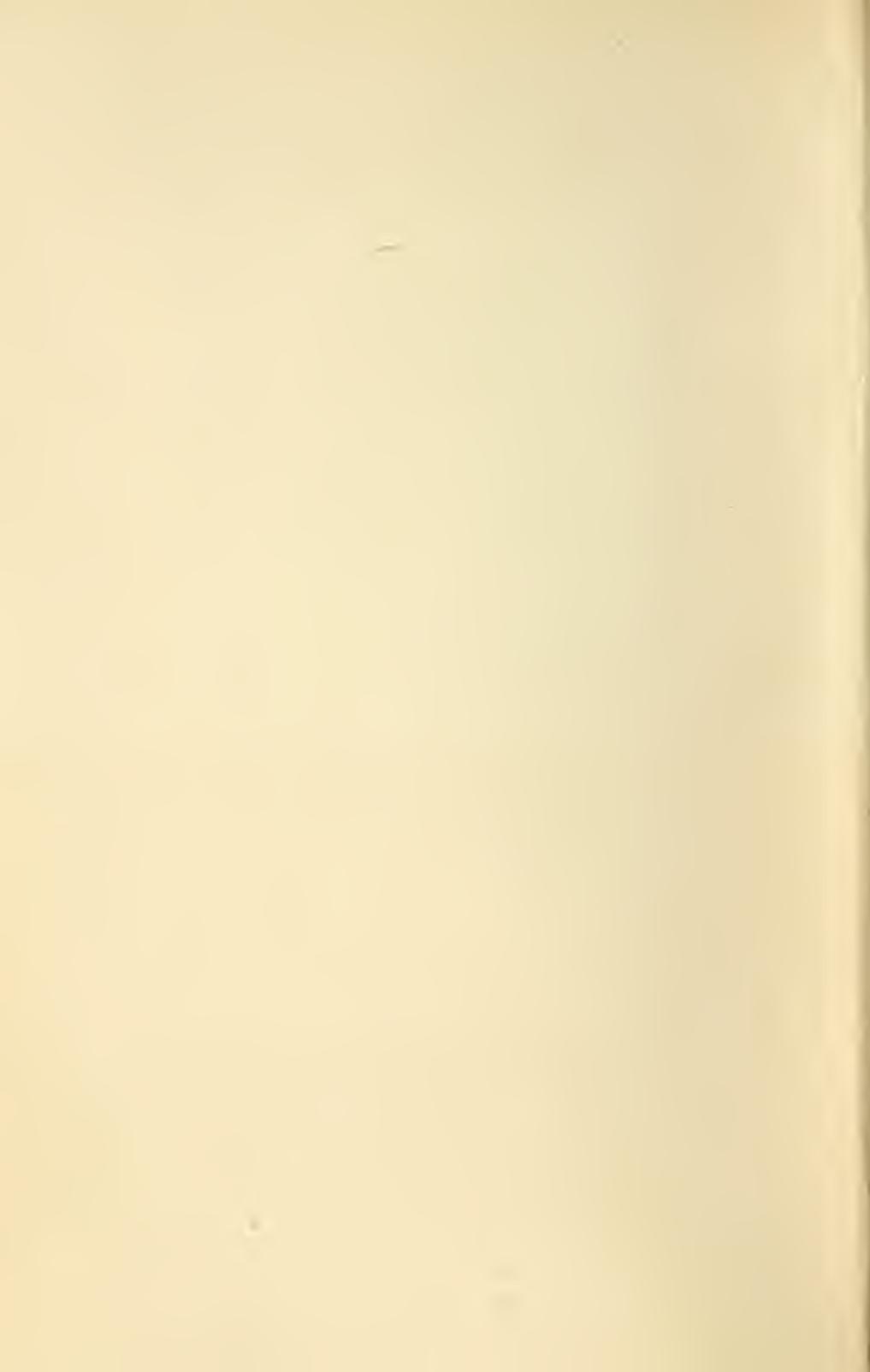
Dr. Gordon S. Watkins



Gordon S. Watkins







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### ERRATA.

P. 45, l. 27, *for an International . . . Berlin* *read several International Congresses in different trades.*

P. 120, l. 6, *for 1848* *read 1846.*

P. 138, note, *for that* *read lest.*

P. 145, l. 21, *for 1850* *read 1851.*

P. 171, note. Reference is to line 26, not 28.

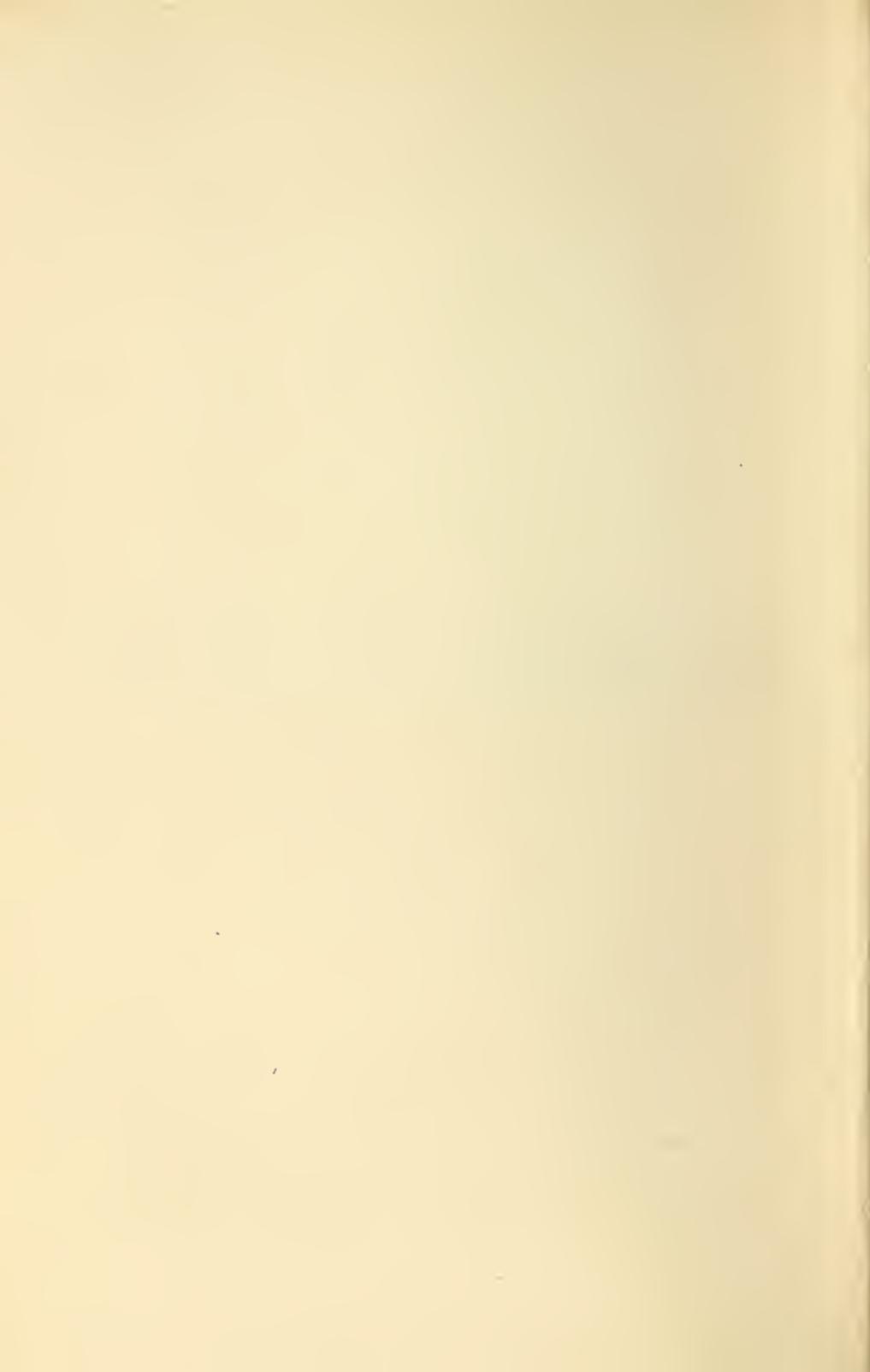
P. 176, l. 31, *for industrial establishment* *read individual establishments.*

P. 221, l. 10, *after further* *insert* and now responsible.

P. 244, l. 1, *insert commas after "danger" and "state."*

P. 306, l. 21, *for Mr. A. J.* *read Sir Arthur,*

P. 315, l. 9, *for rational* *read national.*



# GREAT BRITAIN IN THE LATEST AGE

FROM LAISSEZ FAIRE TO STATE CONTROL

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## PREFACE

THIS book owes its origin to a series of lectures delivered by the authors to troops of the Third Division in Germany in the early days of 1919 in connection with the Army Education Scheme, which laid considerable emphasis on the teaching of "Civics," the demonstration of the duties and privileges of citizenship in the British Commonwealth. The authors were of opinion that such instruction, to be of real value, needed a historical groundwork. They therefore adopted the scheme of endeavouring to give a brief survey of the achievements of the British people during the last hundred years or so, and of the principal tendencies discernible in that period.

The evident interest taken in the lectures suggested the possibility that a book written on the same plan might make a similar appeal to a larger public and also be of practical use to teachers, particularly perhaps to those engaged in adult education, but also to those employed in Secondary Schools and Continuation Schools. A marked feature of democratic development is always the interest aroused in recent and contemporary history. Obvious already, for example, in the classes of the Workers' Educational Association, this interest was greatly stimulated by the events of the Great War. It is hoped

that this little volume may serve the needs of those who want a brief introduction to the study of the general, and not solely the political, history of Great Britain in the Latest Age. The authors have sought to substitute for a bare narrative of events in their strictly chronological sequence a true bird's-eye view of the period, a view which, if necessarily rapid and undetailed, is as far as possible wide and comprehensive. Thus the method of treatment adopted has been by subject, except that in the first three chapters a very brief conspectus of the complete period has been attempted. At the risk of slight repetition, it seemed desirable to try to bring out tendencies not only in particular spheres of national life, but in our recent history regarded as a whole. Only so can the essential connection between the different spheres be adequately appreciated.

F. A. H.  
A. S. T.

*June, 1920.*

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# GREAT BRITAIN IN THE LATEST AGE

## CHAPTER I

### LANDMARKS IN THE HISTORY OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

#### (i) "LAISSEZ FAIRE" (TO 1851)

THERE are few more significant dates than that of our English Revolution of 1688-9. The engrossing struggle between King and Parliament had led to the victory of the latter in the establishment of the Commonwealth. There was a reaction ; the work done had to be redone. The issue had to be made clear beyond any further possibility of doubt. The Bill of Rights and the Act of Settlement are the charters which proclaim definitely the victory of the principle of self-government over despotism, not in so many words, in high-sounding soul-stirring phrase, but prosaically, in matter-of-fact fashion with the sobriety, caution, and apparent compromise typical of this most unromantic, most peaceful, most seemingly conservative of all great revolutions.

The battle for self-government had indeed been won, in the sense that the way had been opened for future constitutional progress : so that all that we have subsequently achieved is owing primarily to that initial triumph. But apart from the ousting of a bigoted and unpopular King ruling by right divine, and the slight deflection of the

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true hereditary descent into the Protestant line, nothing catastrophic happened in 1688-9. The aristocratic chief movers in the substitution of the dour Dutchman for the stupidly obstinate Stuart—nearly all of them peers—and others of their ilk continued to be the chief political force in the state. And if the great landowning Whig families made alliance with the growing “moneyed” class, who came markedly into prominence in the reign which saw the beginnings of the National Debt and the foundation of the Bank of England, that fact did not alter the essential features of the political system which, with but one brief interval at the end of the reign of Anne, continued until 1761—namely, the dominance of the great Whig families, possessing a safe majority in the Upper House and controlling a corrupt House of Commons. These were the days of a rural England, days of the ruling lord and squire and parson in every countryside, when roads were bad and often execrable, and travelling a tedious and uncomfortable process indulged in as seldom as possible, so that folk stayed at home and saw little of the world beyond the horizon of their county-town. It was the England of Sir Roger de Coverley, Squire Western, and the Vicar of Wakefield.

The story of our country in the first half of the eighteenth century has in it little that is romantic, save the episodes of the two Jacobite risings, little that is ennobling save the religious revival of John Wesley. Abroad we became engaged in dynastic wars, wars of the balance of power, devoid of principle, devoid of any splendour. But at home—indissolubly and for the most part rightly connected in the popular mind with the name of Sir Robert Walpole—was developing that remarkable and typical English production—the party system, with a Prime

Minister, a Cabinet, and an organised “His Majesty’s Opposition.” Already the Revolution of 1689 was bearing a wonderful fruit ! At the same time that great statesman who could make gold out of nothing was carrying out an enlightened financial policy, reducing duties on both imports and exports, taking off restrictions from Colonial trade, evincing a wisdom as regards taxation such as no English minister had shown before him, and generally providing in judicious methods of national finance a sound basis for the rapidly increasing commercial prosperity of the country. During the days of his administration, moreover, the country enjoyed a peace, which was of incalculable value to it.

There came a greater than Walpole in the elder Pitt, “the organiser of victory.” Brought to the helm of the state when the opening stages of the third great conflict of the eighteenth century were going disastrously for us, with wonderful clearness of imaginative vision he directed the war policy of the country with an extraordinary success. He may not have been personally responsible for all that has been popularly attributed to him, but he is the presiding genius, the majestic figure of the period that gave us the military and naval triumphs of Plassey, Minden, and the Heights of Abraham, Lagos, and Quiberon Bay, saw us firmly established in Canada and India, and mistress of the seas.

The days of glory vanished rapidly after the accession of George III., whose career was a salutary warning of the dangers possible even in a constitutional monarchy. The new sovereign, glorying in the name of Briton, resolved to be a patriot king—always patriot, always king—saw in the party system an obstacle to the realisation both of his patriotism and his kingship. We must have not members

of a party acting in accordance with a one-sided programme, but the best statesmen in the land pursuing the best interests of the state, of the entire community, as envisaged by the most conscientious, the most devoted of crowned heads. The ministers selected by George included such men as Bute and North ; the conscience or obstinacy of the King was in large measure responsible for the breach with the American colonies, the failure of the attempt to secure Catholic Emancipation which should have been the accompaniment of the Act of Union with Ireland, and the long series of misfortunes, disasters and humiliations which, despite certain redeeming features, certain glorious episodes, are the most marked characteristic of our history in the second half of the eighteenth century. But eighteenth-century Toryism—the Toryism of Blackstone—was essentially optimistic, cheerful, and contented.

The nineteenth century opened amid the flood-tide of revolution. Revolution which had come to England a hundred years earlier peaceably, almost prosaically, came now to the rest of Europe with fire, and exultation, and inspiration, with passion, violence, and blood. There were many who, though at first carried away with the first heat of enthusiasm for the clarion cry of Freedom, Equality, and Brotherhood, were later on horrified by the practical interpretations of Rousseau's doctrine as demonstrated by the Jacobins. At first cordially welcomed in the whole of Great Britain, not alone by her Tom Paines and Mackintoshes, her Charles Foxes and Pitts, the French Revolution came to assume the shape of a horror and a menace. Burke, at the first a voice crying in the wilderness, not long after became the spokesman of the general feeling. When the orgies of the Terror loomed large in the public eye, it was not easy for contemporaries to see

in the Revolution still the source of blessing to mankind in generations yet to come. Moreover, the Revolution became propagandist, aggressive. It sought to instal itself by force of arms in countries where, even if its principles might be admired, its present methods were abhorred. Great Britain, in self-defence, found herself involved in war with the Republic. From that day till 1815 she was scarcely to know peace. Such peace as she did know was brief, harassed, and totally unstable.

Only her naval supremacy saved England ; only the triumphs of Cape St. Vincent, Camperdown, and the Nile were gleams in an almost universal gloom. The first breathing-space, provided by the Treaty of Lunéville, had been immediately preceded by crushing defeats of our allies at Marengo and Hohenlinden. The failure of the early stages of Bonaparte's ambitious Continental Blockade, the battle of Copenhagen, the French reverses in Egypt, made our position somewhat more satisfactory when the gigantic war was for a second time suspended by the Peace of Amiens. But the ambition of the First Consul made the interval short indeed. Once more we were in the toils of war, and, despite Trafalgar, we had not yet weathered the storm when Pitt died, in 1806. Years of struggle, of danger, of disappointments, were to follow. But at last we were to have the opportunity of utilising our military resources to some advantage, instead of allowing our soldiers to die of fever in West Indian Islands, and to maintain a glorious inactivity on the mud-flats of Walcheren. The opportunity came in the national risings in the Peninsula ; the power to perceive it and seize it was in Castlereagh, that of utilising it in Wellesley. When the allies were crushing Napoleon at the tremendous battle of Leipzig and harrying his armies across the Rhine,

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Wellington was forcing his way through the Pyrenees into France.

Napoleon despatched to Elba, the representatives of the great powers assembled in solemn conclave in Vienna to decide the fate of France, to remake the map of Europe, to endeavour to maintain peace—and the *status quo* for ever. The episode of the Hundred Days disturbed their discussions; but after the Waterloo campaign the European Concert met again at Aix-la-Chapelle, at Troppau, at Verona. A member of the Quadruple Alliance at the outset, Great Britain gradually drifted apart from the concert, and in 1823, the year after the last-mentioned congress, over the questions of the Spanish colonies and the War of Greek Independence, she definitely broke away to pursue her own policy and maintain on the whole an attitude of detachment as regards foreign affairs which lasted into the following century.

While the stupendous drama of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars and, later, the activities of these congresses were in progress, events of quite equally great moment to herself were taking place within the boundaries of Great Britain. An extraordinary transformation which, despite its fairly gradual character, is popularly known, and with sufficient accuracy, as the Industrial Revolution, had come over the country. In a relatively very brief space of time the novel phenomena appeared of the factory system, the *entrepreneur* class, the industrial towns of the north. The capitalist loomed large as never before, and the cleavage between Capital on the one side and Labour on the other became an essential feature of the industrial organisation. With the rapid improvement in transit and the congregation of large masses in the towns, the old isolation of the countryside came to be broken down.

Population became much less evenly scattered. At the same time it prodigiously increased: a fact which gave Mr. Malthus and many others seriously, and often very gloomily, to think. In short, a great social as well as a great economic change was taking place.

Changes of that order must inevitably produce corresponding political results. The Industrial Revolution almost immediately brought in its train all manner of abuses, wrongs and problems, taking men unawares almost, before they had acquired the habit of thinking of such things as problems at all, and when, accordingly, there existed no machinery by which to deal with them. The grievance of the early victims of the remorseless monster-mechanism of modern industrialism inevitably, justly, endeavoured to make itself heard. But the fear of revolution gripped the legislators of St. Stephen's as it gripped the plenipotentiaries at the continental congresses. To the ears of both there seemed no difference between the loud outcry of the anarchic demagogue and the groanings of men driven into protest by the grim pressure of a system which seemed like a relentless machine. The fears of propagandist France had driven England into panic measures, suspension of Habeas Corpus, Seditious Meetings and Treasonable Practices Acts, the "Six Acts," press prosecutions innumerable, transportations, executions. Even after the French terror had gone there stood like a nerveless mass the deadweight of Tory reaction, the belief in simple repression as the mainstay of state policy. For the oppressed workers in the towns all forms of concerted action—to talk, to write, to meet—were equally seditious.

But in 1823, or thereabouts, there dawned the half-light of a better day. The forces of mere obstruction were

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less powerful ; the Benthamites, preaching indeed a gospel of individualism, preached also the necessity of reason, order, and efficiency in government, and the need of political and, particularly, legal reform. Always efficiency and enlightenment ; and no government based solely on conservatism and unconscious of the simplest truths concerning realities of the new order could be efficient. The methods of government which had carried Great Britain through the war were run dry. They had been purely defensive. The British Islands had been maintained inviolate from the invader—be he French usurper or revolutionary agitator. But that had been allowed to satisfy. From that state of things we have travelled far indeed during the past century, but the conception that it should be an avowed primary function of the state actively and of set purpose to mould social and economic conditions came gradually, and was not powerful until recently. The reformers, to whom the beginnings of the tendency are due, had no such comprehensive view of the state, and for the most part believed in the minimum of state action. Only they differed from the inert Tories in this, that they saw the imperative need of reform, and looked to the government to carry out some of the practical measures of amelioration they prescribed. Some of these men, like the body of extraordinarily efficient Poor Law reformers of 1834, were uncompromising champions of *Laisser Faire*, believers in order and symmetry in administration, but decidedly devoid of sentiment ; others, like Wilberforce, Clarkson, Mackintosh, and, above all, Lord Shaftesbury, were essentially humanitarian, inspired not by an abstract theory, but by an enthusiasm for the cause of the weak and the oppressed. But to all these reformers of the early decades of the nineteenth century,

whether philosophic radicals or humanitarian Tories, their country owes an immense debt of gratitude—to those already mentioned, and others not less great—to Francis Burdett, Francis Place, Edwin Chadwick, Samuel Romilly, Michael Sadler, and William Cobbett.

Each of these men was the strenuous personal advocate of the cause he championed. But some of them were more than that. The classes whose interests they proclaimed did indeed need spokesmen and mediators. But if reform was to be substantial and permanent, they themselves must become organic, a political force, themselves active for their deliverance, and participators in the work of social and industrial progress. Place and Cobbett, in particular, took in hand the great task of helping to render public opinion articulate, and its consensus a power in politics. By 1830 the opinion of the labouring classes had in some sort become organised, and the formation of definite political unions in the new large manufacturing towns was the outward and visible, portentous sign thereof. For the first time in our history—if a certain ephemeral experiment of the Commonwealth be excepted—the force that is called the democracy, had powerfully revealed itself. The democracy was demanding reform, and as the essential preliminary of that reform, the reconstitution of the instrument whereby reform must be brought about. The sort of Parliament, corrupt, unrepresentative, which was perhaps good enough for the eighteenth century, for England agricultural, was not good enough for England industrialised. Many were already crying out for manhood suffrage. It was becoming apparent to all save the most bigoted Tories of the Wellington type that some sort of reform of Parliament there had to be. In the House of Commons Lord John

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Russell unwearingly, unswervingly, led the cause of moderate reform. The sheer force of public opinion triumphed over all obstacles of influence and corruption at the polls, of the Tory peers in the Upper House, of the attempted administration of "the Duke." It was a plain choice between the passage of the third Reform Bill and revolution. The people had won.

The great Reform Act of 1832, despite the immense trouble it had to become law at all, was far from revolutionary in its actual provisions. The way had, of course, been opened to the further reforms that have culminated in the Franchise Act of 1918, but in the meantime the proletariat was still excluded from representation ; only the middle class had been added. The same class had been introduced to political power in Great Britain as two years earlier had come into its own with the accession of the "bourgeois monarchy" in France. Moreover, in the main, the newly enfranchised class proved at first to be quite content to leave the management to the same type of aristocratic rulers and legislators as had given the tone to Parliament and the administration prior to the passing of the Act.

The reform of Parliament—because it was the demonstration that social change in the state must be followed by corresponding political change—is the most significant fact in the reform movement, but it was not actually its inauguration. Already, in 1828, the civil disabilities of Protestant dissenters had been removed by the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts ; and the following year a still greater triumph had been won by the passing of Catholic Emancipation, which admitted Romanists to membership of Parliament and to most civil and political employments. The next great reform to follow the

Reform Act was that of the Poor Law, resulting from the investigations of Blomfield, Sumner, and Nassau Senior. The Poor Law of 1834 was a great advance on its predecessor, and it has had no successor. A workable, efficient system was evolved ; the scandalous conditions of indiscriminate outdoor relief prevailing, amounting to pauperisation, were swept away. And the new work-houses were not over-full. They were the workhouses we know from *Oliver Twist*, often more dreaded than the gaols. The humanitarian instinct is not apparent in the Poor Law Act of 1834.

It was, however, the inspiration of some other great reforms of the period—the abolition of capital punishment for such offences as forgery, coining, sacrilege, horse-stealing, and sheep-stealing, in the abolition of slavery throughout the British Dominions and the passing of the Factory Act of 1833. In his efforts to force through Parliament some check on the supposed freedom of contract, equality of bargaining power between the powerful employer and the child of nine, Shaftesbury was coming to grips with the *Laisser Faire* principle, denouncing the aloofness of the “Manchester School,” which in the name of freedom condemned the weak in England to conditions worse than those of slavery, and demanding that Parliament should assume its proper functions, the protection of those for whom “neither wealth, nor station, nor age has raised a bulwark against tyranny.”

Two other most significant reforms of the thirties must be added to this enumeration, the Municipal Reform Act of 1835 and the Education Act of 1839, which first established a central department for education and introduced the principle of compulsion.

Between 1828 and 1840 great strides had been made,

yet in various directions, both economic and political, the most energetic reformers had not been satisfied. A series of bad harvests from 1837 onwards, together with a fall in the level of wages, accentuated the problem of how to feed a still rapidly increasing population on the principle of the Corn Laws of 1815-28. It was quite beyond the capacity of the country to provide all its food requirements, and the welfare of the poorer classes demanded free trade in the most elementary foodstuffs. Championed all over the country by the eloquence of Bright and Cobden, the Free Trade cause won the day not only in the country, but in Parliament, and the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 was secured under the administration of the Tory, Sir Robert Peel, who, together with Huskisson, had already been responsible for an enlightened revision of our tariffs and financial system generally, and had materially assisted British commerce by taking off the duties on hundreds of articles.

The Free Trade agitation had been successful in achieving its object ; the other propaganda of the time did not have the same immediate success—on the surface, though its influence by 1848 had already become considerable, and gave clear promise of immensely greater results in the future. This agitation was for a much more radical reform—both political and social. The impulse of this movement came from the skilled artisans, whose numbers increased year by year, and who were bound in time to gain a realisation of their numbers and a sense of their potential influence. The impetus to association among the working classes was growing apace, trade clubs, benefit societies, and co-operative societies were being formed, and Robert Owen, the first great name in the history of English Socialism, formed a federation of separate associations

in the "Grand National Consolidated Trades Union"; the aims of Owen and his union being the realisation of an eight hours' day, or increased wages, profit-sharing, and the principle of the right to work. They do not seem to us of to-day a formidable programme; but they horrified a large section of the community in the thirties, who regarded the banding together of half a million men in an association founded as a means to obtain them as a menace to society. So great was the fear of such combinations that in 1834 six Dorsetshire labourers were sentenced to seven years' transportation for administering an oath in the endeavour to form a lodge in their village.

The essential trouble was the fact that already the reformed Parliament was falling out of touch with the country. Parliament and the classes which controlled it, and which were represented in it, namely, the upper and middle classes, were satisfied with what had been done already, and were hostile to any changes more drastic than those that had taken place so far. The great parliamentary protagonist of reform, Lord John Russell, was now become as much enamoured of the constitution as it was after the passage of the Reform Bill, as Burke had been of the institution in the old pre-reform days. In these circumstances, Parliament appearing to them to be merely nerveless and self-complaisant, the attitude of those whose point of view was that an essential transformation of the state had only just begun tended to be violent, and perhaps in some cases cantankerous. In 1837 the Working Men's Association, just formed, adopted its Great Charter, demanding six necessary reforms—manhood suffrage, the abolition of the property qualification for membership of Parliament, vote by ballot, payment of members, equal electoral districts, and annual parliaments. Two years

later a great national convention with representatives from the manufacturing towns, under the leadership of Feargus O'Connor, presented a petition to Parliament, based upon the points of the Charter. Parliament refused to consider it. Chartism, not very happy in its methods or its leaders, regarded by the governing authorities as a public danger, and prosecuted whenever opportunity offered, remained a suppressed force until 1848, when Feargus O'Connor once more sought to present the principles of the People's Charter in a monster petition. The procession through the streets of London formed to carry the petition to Westminster was in the eyes of the Government a menace to law and order; elaborate precautions had been taken involving not only the police, but also soldiery put under the command of the Duke of Wellington. But the intentions of the Chartist were perfectly peaceable, they had no wish to come to bloodshed, the procession melted away, the petition was not presented. Such was the end of Chartism as a political movement. Great Britain, with no force within her borders more revolutionary, was a land of blissful peace in comparison with the rest of Europe, in 1848, the year of revolutions.

Chartism perhaps appears to us nowadays rather a strange ineffectual sort of phenomenon. Its career was brief and somewhat inglorious. Its demands appear so moderate it may seem difficult to understand the point of view of those who saw in it a serious danger. It came to an abrupt end, and its influence on subsequent history is not obvious on the surface. Yet it has a very real significance if only because Karl Marx, taking many of his ideas from England, saw in the action of the Chartist a wonderful portent, believed the accomplishment of

their aims to be the essential means towards that new society, the construction of which was the goal of his teaching. Marx, calling for the union of all workers in every country, had little direct influence on Great Britain ; but the preaching of an international socialism was bound indirectly to affect the progress of workers' combinations in every country. More comprehensive views, more ambitious projects were afoot ; it was beginning to be felt that it was no use merely tinkering with the problems of the industrial organism any longer ; something more drastic was needed, concerted united effort. Those who fought for the ideal of economic rights of labour and the establishment of a true democracy had strong forces against which to battle. There was the affrighted ignorance of those who shied at the very name Socialism, without attempting to examine it ; there was not only reactionary Toryism, but the enlightened Liberalism of the utilitarian school, who saw their most cherished dogmas menaced ; even of men like Bright and Cobden, who could see in Trade Unionism only a perverted tyranny ; even of humanitarians like Shaftesbury, who, though willing to dedicate his whole life to the service of the poor, disapproved of their attempts to help themselves by organisation.

Yet the trade union movement was making redoubtable strides in the late forties, was being organised on a really business-like footing—the Amalgamated Society of Engineers being the model for many that followed—and they were preparing for political action, and thinking of securing representation in Parliament—the representation of the group interest as distinct from that of the merely geographical unit. Very notable, too, were the signs apparent about the middle of the century of an approaching

change of attitude in political thought. John Stuart Mill, born and bred in the most rigid school of individualism, was gradually coming round to a conviction that, however admirable the abstract theory of liberty of individual action might be, and however desirable as a protest against reaction and repression, it could not be the solvent of the problems of the new age, that the unrestricted struggle of competition must always involve much misery, and could never produce a just social system, that the state, represented in the Government, must assume the *rôle* of guardian of the weak by curbing the selfishness of the strong, and must not only avoid the evil but ensue the good.

Such were the signs of the times in the middle of the nineteenth century. In 1851 the Great Exhibition took place, and within the Crystal Palace were displayed samples of the wealth, the productivity, the industrial energy of the British people, rich in all material prosperity. During the last few decades Great Britain had been without a rival industrially and commercially, not merely *prima inter pares*, but the "workshop of the world." The great modern railway systems had done more than take shape, the era of construction on a large scale having started by 1836. The Cunard and the P. & O. were flourishing, the first of our great oceanic steamship lines. In 1846 the Electric Telegraph Company had brought the new force of electricity into general use. In 1840 the "penny post" had come into existence, and in 1846 the first penny daily paper, the *Daily News*, had appeared. Well might the citizen of the year of the Great Exhibition feel that a miraculous progress had been accomplished since the beginning of the century, and take pride in the illustrious record of his country in its multifarious

inventions, its vast production, the cheapening of commodities, the constant introduction of new amenities of civilisation. And it was not only in the material elements of civilisation that the England of that day was prolific. In Literature and Art the mid-century was extraordinarily brilliant. In 1848 the pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was formed ; in the next year Ruskin published *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, and in 1851-3 *Stones of Venice*. In 1851 the prince of black and white cartoonists, Tenniel, became a contributor to *Punch*. Within these years were published Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* and *Pendennis*, Dickens' *David Copperfield*, Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, Browning's *Christmas Eve and Easter Day*, Mrs. Gaskell's *Mary Barton*, Charlotte Brontë's *Shirley*, Borrow's *Lavengro*, Kingsley's *Alton Locke*, Carlyle's *Life of Sterling*, J. S. Mill's *Principles of Political Economy*, part of Macaulay's *History of England*, Spencer's *Social Statics*. In Science William Thomson, the future Lord Kelvin, and in Philology Max Müller, were doing some of their most important work. In Architecture the greatest work of the Gothic revival in England, the Houses of Parliament, had been begun in 1840, and was by the year of the Great Exhibition very nearly completed.

It is indeed an amazing list—extraordinary in the height of genius revealed in it, yet more extraordinary in the quantity of work in the spheres of art and science of the highest quality. To be conscious of such luxuriance in all the domains of human activity was for most men to be immensely proud of it, for many to boast—perhaps idly boast of it. There were not wanting those to whom it appeared as if *Ultima Thule* had been all but reached, who, thinking of the mission of Victorian England, supposed that it had practically reached its goal. Such a feeling was

apt to produce an attitude of smug self-complacency, and sometimes self-righteousness. It is because of this feeling of self-satisfaction in early Victorianism—as this spirit of the time has come to be called—that the beginning of the next century produced a strong reaction against it, hostility and even contempt. It was discovered to be dowdy and ugly, cursed with bad taste in dress, in furniture, in decoration, superficial, commonplace, because it was not alive to the crookedness, complexities and perplexities in life that a later generation had discovered. More recently still, the Great War has rather tended to foster quite a different feeling—one of a regretful fondness for those days of crinoline and chignon, even perhaps of prunes and prisms, because of the smoothness, placidity, and peace of days less disturbed than ours.

The source of much of the strength, the remedy for many of the defects, of the *Laisser Faire* period lay in religious movements. The Anglican Church in the eighteenth century is a by-word for the inertness and perfunctoriness from which Wesleyanism was a revolt. If its latitudinarian thinkers were often finely tolerant, their teaching was apt to be arid and uninspiring; and while, as regards practical work, one has to remember the great religious societies—*e.g.* the S.P.G. and S.P.C.K., which had their inception in the reign of William III.—what one is most aware of is the enervating parochial alliance between Tory parson and Tory squire. When one considers that the Church was popularly regarded as one of the main bulwarks of the old *régime*, and that both Benthamitism and the rising power of Protestant dissent were inclined to be hostile to the establishment, it is not surprising to find that in the early days of the Reform

movement, in the thirties, Dr. Arnold and many others feared for its continuance.

The Church of England was saved by reforming itself and also by receiving new inspiration and a great access of spiritual life from two different directions. First, there were the extremely important improvements brought about largely through the agency of the Ecclesiastical Commission of 1836-40, whereby many glaring financial disparities were removed and abuses of pluralism, absenteeism and slackness were eliminated. There was, in the second place, the very remarkable influence of the Evangelical and Broad Church movements. The beginnings of the former can be traced to the appearance of Wilberforce's *A Practical View of Christianity*, in 1797, and the formation of the celebrated "Clapham Sect" in 1807. First realised as a small community largely pre-occupied with foreign missions and the abolition of the slave trade, during the French wars the evangelical party became a powerful moral and political force, not a little owing to the reaction in the country against the supposed infidelity of the French Revolution. While revolutionary thought stressed the natural rights and perfectibility of man, the evangelicals convicted him of sin and insisted that he was a fallen creature, only to be saved through atoning sacrifice. But while their chief concern was with moral regeneration in view of a future life, the evangelicals were practical reformers, fully alive to the necessity of ameliorating the conditions of life on earth, and the great Lord Shaftesbury was one of them. Many of the most distinguished members of the party were not clerics, but laymen, and this fact was perhaps helpful in emphasising the community in practical purpose between them and the dissenters while between the latter and the Broad

Churchmen, of whom Thomas Arnold, Whately, and Hampden were the most outstanding figures, there was no insuperable dogmatic barrier to the accomplishment of possible reunion.

It was far otherwise with the other great movement within the Church of England, which may be said to have been ushered in by Rose's sermons at Cambridge, but the advent of which is most ordinarily associated with the appearance in 1833 of the first of the *Tracts for the Times*. The Oxford movement was the strongest possible reaction against the latitudinarianism of the Broad Church school in its insistence upon the essential catholicity and continuity of the Anglican Church from pre-Reformation days. If the inspiration of these new Anglo-Catholics, Hurrell Froude, Keble, Pusey, and Newman was the grand conception of the oneness of the Christian Church, its appeal was historical, productive of sympathy with the mediæval theocracy, not modern and liberal, conducive to comprehensiveness : for Protestantism was anathema.

These years saw another Catholic revival, the consequence of Catholic Emancipation. Political disabilities once removed, the Roman Church began at once to make headway, its most notable protagonists being Wiseman, who started his crusade in 1835, and Manning. In 1850, to the consternation of many, Pius IX., proclaiming the restoration of the hierarchy, organised the country into provinces and dioceses, and appointed archbishops and bishops to them. The system has taken firm root, and the Roman episcopate in England at present boasts two cardinals.

Protestant dissent had been freed of practically all its impediments by 1854, not only as regards political disqualifications, but also as regards grievances connected

with education, the celebration of marriage and burial services, etc. Long ere that date it had become strong in numbers and in influence among the middle classes, and the stalwart hard-working, provident nonconformist was one of the characteristic figures of industrialised England. The dissenting minister was still an object of caricature, as in such novels as *Pickwick Papers*, *Bleak House*, and *Ten Thousand a Year*; but by the fifties the notion that Nonconformity was rather vulgarly bourgeois was passing away.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the effect of these different religious movements on early Victorian England. If the religious impulse of those days is often, and deservedly, thought of as narrow and limited, if it could degenerate into a mere conventional respectability, and even into pharisaism, it was, on the other hand, widely diffused and made a deep imprint on the whole of society from the court to the cottage, inculcating a genuine appreciation of the value of purity of life and integrity of character together with a sense of moral responsibility, which produced much practical philanthropy. The social work which the state regarded as beyond its province was undertaken by private individuals, inspired for the most part by religious as well as humanitarian motives.

## CHAPTER II

### LANDMARKS IN THE HISTORY OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

#### (ii) "SPLENDID ISOLATION" (1851-1901)

THERE is one very important exception to the rule of non-interference on the part of the state during the thirties and forties—and that is in the realm of foreign policy, as it was under the direction of Lord Palmerston. Idolised by a large public among his fellow-countrymen as a patriot, a man who meant business and would stand no nonsense, generally hated abroad as a truculent meddler and bully, Palmerston was an interventionist in external affairs for two reasons—first, because he believed it to be his duty to protect British interests, whatever and wherever they might be—even were they only the personal interests of the humblest of traders of British birth or connection carrying on their business concerns in the remotest sea and archipelago; secondly, because he had a most ardent enthusiasm for the cause of national liberty against autocratic oppression, and believed that it was the *rôle* of Great Britain to champion the cause of the small nations and oppressed peoples of Europe.

Actuated by his first motive, we find him generally hostile to the France of Louis Philippe, fearful of her aggrandisement as inimical to British interests, and, therefore, endeavouring to thwart her policy with regard to Spain because he suspected her of designs against the

full independence of the Peninsula ; coming into collision with her in the Near East when she adopted Mehemet Ali, the disturber of the serenity of the Ottoman Empire, as her protégé, because he considered her anti-Turkish policy threatening to our interests in the Far East. So, again, in 1850, we find him sending a fleet to the Piraeus and demanding excessive compensation for injuries done to two British subjects, the seizure of a small piece of land belonging to the historian Finlay, violence done by a mob to the residence of a certain Jew, who happened to have been born in Gibraltar, by name Don Pacifico.

Actuated by his second motive, though he did not suggest the armed participation of Great Britain in the great liberal movements on the Continent in the year 1848 —which would have involved us in war with half Europe : a state of things which no section of opinion in the country would have sanctioned—he lost no opportunity of proclaiming British sympathy with the liberal and national cause, in whatever land displayed. He did more than that—he supplied arms to the Sicilians in their revolt against the Neapolitan government, and when Louis Kossuth fled from Hungary after the Magyar defeat, to Turkey and pressure was put upon the Sultan to hand him over, he sent the fleet that subsequently went to the Piraeus in the interests of Finlay and Don Pacifico, to give moral support to the Sultan.

The Don Pacifico incident produced a great deal of criticism and a most important debate in the House of Commons, in which not only Palmerston's action in this particular case, but his whole foreign policy was called in question. The debate ended with the triumphant vindication of the Foreign Secretary, who won a great personal success with his eloquent glorification of the British flag

as the sure protection of the British subject in every clime. Perhaps even more noteworthy was the approval accorded to the speech of Lord John Russell, then Prime Minister, in which he gave utterance to the doctrine that "besides the general interest of mankind, it is our particular interest with regard to Europe that freedom should be extended."

But although it is clear that nothing that Palmerston did ran counter to any deep feeling on the part of the general public, and that his method of gaining diplomatic points for his country by the display of force, without actually having to resort to it, was approved; on the other hand, the popularity of his conduct of the foreign office was mainly a tribute to a domineering and attractive personality, and cannot be taken as the indication of any genuine tendency of political thought in Great Britain as regards the question of foreign relations. As a matter of fact, the best opinion of thoughtful people was certainly against Palmerston. Hostile to his ideas and his methods at this time, was not only the apprehensive Toryism that saw in his policy an encouragement of Jacobinism, but the idealism of Mr. Gladstone discerning in Palmerstonian policy an obvious national presumption and arrogance, of Cobden arguing on economic grounds and of Bright on higher ethical grounds in favour of the principles of international goodwill and peace.

Since 1815 Great Britain had enjoyed continuous peace, and there were enthusiasts in plenty in 1851 to see in this fact the indication of the dawn of a new era of peace for mankind in general. Such hopes proved premature indeed. In the very next year the country was to be involved in a European war, which was to be followed at no larger intervals by others even more momentous.

The Liberal administration of Lord Aberdeen, in which

Gladstone, fully developing the free trade principles of Peel and Huskisson, and seeming almost wizard-like in the brilliance and dexterity of his budgets, proved himself to be perhaps the greatest finance minister in our history, found itself faced by a crisis in what we know as the Eastern Question, the greatest disturber of European peace in the nineteenth century, and drifted on in an ineffectual way into war with Russia on behalf of Turkey. The Crimean War being over, after but a short breathing space, we had war brought upon us yet further afield with the outbreak of the Indian Mutiny in 1857. Before the mutiny was suppressed we were engaged in hostilities with China, not unnaturally resentful of commercial enterprises—and especially the opium traffic of British merchants—the success of which inevitably entailed foreign penetration into the ancient empire.

The main interest of European history during the next thirty years lies in events in which Great Britain, however much directly or indirectly affected, did not take part as a protagonist. The most inspiring story in the history of the nineteenth century is that of the unification of Italy. In 1859 Victor Emmanuel, with the help of Napoleon III., defeated the Austrians at Magenta and Solferino, only to be deserted and betrayed by his French ally at the armistice of Villafranca. Italian patriotism triumphed over this betrayal by the unwearying skill of Cavour and the heroic military leadership of Garibaldi. Palmerston, no more a lover now of Napoleon III. than he had been of his "bourgeois" predecessor, once again did something to help the Italian cause, this time by saving it from some of the possible consequences of the French Emperor's scheme of instituting a weak kingdom of Northern Italy only, when he resisted the proposal of a European conference to

settle the Italian question, which would undoubtedly have endeavoured to maintain the *status quo* and would have been an obstruction to the efforts of the Italians themselves, which were at last crowned with success in 1861.

The significance of events in Italy was obvious to observers in England at the time ; and the influence of the great movement to a new national unity in that country was an inspiration to many of the best English minds—to the two Brownings, Meredith and Swinburne. But the true “ inwardness ” of certain other very important events on the Continent was not self-apparent. We did not take much interest in the internal affairs of Prussia and the first appearance of the Junker Bismarck at the helm of the Prussian state ; nor is it surprising that we failed to comprehend all the complications of the extraordinarily intricate question of the Danish duchies, which Bismarck used as his first lever in that policy of brutal Machiavellianism, which had its consummation in the foundation of the modern German Empire. When Prussia and Austria threatened an united invasion of Schleswig-Holstein, Palmerston, taking the side of the nation contending against the oppression of the strong, as he had done with Italy, would have supported the cause of Denmark even to the extent of intervention. Queen Victoria was hostile. Seeing an analogy between the Austrian dominions in Italy and our rule in Ireland, she had regarded the movement in Italy as dangerous to constituted authority. So now her sympathies were with the ancient historic realm of Francis Joseph, and she regarded it as disastrous to stand forward as the protectress of Danish rights. But in this she was not in harmony with the majority of her people, who, seeing in this question nothing more serious than a territorial dispute between a little country and two

large ones, were inclined to side with the little one. British sympathy was sufficiently pronounced to give Denmark the impression that she could count upon our active assistance. But France and Russia were unwilling to act with us ; we were not strong enough by ourselves to take a determined stand, and merely an ineffectual protest was all the obstruction which Great Britain offered to the incorporation of the Danish duchies, which rendered possible the construction of the Kiel Canal and the German bid in a later generation for power upon the seas.

The Seven Weeks' War with the great victory of Sadowa led to the sensational triumph of Prussia over Austria. British public opinion, in so far as it was interested in these events, was gratified rather than otherwise by the rise of a new power in Europe which might act as a counterpoise to the two which we then regarded as our rivals, namely, the France of the adventurer Napoleon III. and Russia, the potential menace to British interests in the East.

The Emperor of the French was suspect, and so when Bismarck took his next great step forward, in the early stages of the Franco-Prussian War British feeling was preponderatingly anti-French. The bellicose aims and ambitious character of Napoleon were so obvious that even without the Ems telegram ordinary opinion found the aggressor not in the Prussians, but in the French. It was not until a later date that Bismarck's manipulation of the occasion of the war became known and understood. The revelation that Napoleon had been plotting to annex Belgium particularly alienated British opinion. Officially Great Britain maintained complete neutrality, taking no other action save calling upon both combatants to respect the neutrality of Belgium and Luxembourg. When

France was crushed and Thiers made an appeal for mediation, the government refused. But the humiliations put upon her—in particular the forced cession of Alsace and Lorraine—rallied a good deal of British feeling to the support of France.

Yet, broadly speaking, both the official attitude of the government and the sentiments of the people towards those great conflicts which held in them such tremendous consequences for the world were very much detached—we might almost say, negligent. Our relations with the great extra-European struggle between North and South in America is of importance because of the *Alabama* case, and because of that it is of very great importance. It was a momentous happening when one of the great world powers voluntarily agreed to submit a question in dispute, which involved maritime issues, to arbitration, and, when the finding of the court was heavily against her, accepted without protest the decision and the penalty.

If the national point of view appears insular, appearances are in some degree deceptive. The horizon of men's outlook was distinctly widening. If the Englishman paid insufficient attention to what was happening on the European Continent, that was partly because he was looking further afield—to our dominions in the Far East and to our Colonies. We have reached the epoch in our domestic history of Gladstone and Disraeli. For years these two most markedly contrasted figures dominated the political arena—Gladstone, the typically English member of a dignified squirearchy, conservative by training and instinct, fervidly liberal by conviction, refined scholar, essentially religious in his entire outlook both in private and in public life, great as regards foreign as well as internal affairs because of his idealism, but also a practical

statesman shining chiefly as a social reformer and a consummate financier; Disraeli, a flashy flamboyant figure, superficially a Jew adventurer, exceedingly nimble-witted, but without great depth of conviction, yet a man of great political acumen, immensely ambitious and possessed of a very brilliant and oriental imagination, giving him a grandiose and luxuriant vision of the British Empire, which has left an enduring impression on our history.

The Far East dazzled Disraeli, but also kindled to action. The imperial conceptions which appeared in the garb of fiction in *Tancred* were not mere dreams, theorisings; they were translated into deeds. The Empire of India became a reality. Queen Victoria, in 1876, assumed the title of Empress of India. It was not a little notable that though the transference came long after the death of Beaconsfield, yet another of the ideas of *Tancred* has materialised and the capital of our Indian Empire has come to be Delhi. If the addition of the new imperial title to the English crown was the consummation of Beaconsfield's grand design, and if that event is not merely spectacular but really momentous in our imperial history, just as important was his purchase of those four millions-worth of shares in the Suez Canal from the Khedive, which gave to Great Britain the predominance in the control of the waterway where Europe, Africa, and Asia meet. Other routes have since been opened up, but the Suez Canal still remains the most important highway in what is probably, from a strategic point of view, the most significant quarter of the entire globe.

With his eye set steadily upon our Asiatic possessions, earful of anything that might interfere with the maintenance of our communications with India, Beaconsfield

viewed with supreme distrust and apprehension the state of affairs brought about in the Balkans by the complete military triumph of Russia over Turkey in 1877, and the acceptance by the latter of the terms of the Treaty of San Stefano, which, besides recognising the independence of Rumania, Serbia, Montenegro, and creating a new and greatly enlarged Bulgaria, so making the Slav and not the Ottoman the dominant power in the Peninsula, gave to Russia Kars and Batoum and the command of the roads into Mesopotamia and Persia. The Turkish power in the Near East was regarded as the bulwark of our possessions in the Far East, Russia regarded as our most dangerous rival, her supremacy over Turkey an imminent menace to the security of our hold over India. The populace had begun to be trained by Disraeli to think imperially, to include within their horizon not only the British Islands, but our possessions beyond the seas; and among those of them to whom the Empire meant just something gaudy and brilliant, a war fever arose—"England will fight and England will be right"—and the inglorious phenomenon which we call Jingoism manifested itself in the streets of London. The war was averted. Beaconsfield and Salisbury went to Berlin, helped with Bismarck to secure certain modifications of the San Stefano Treaty favouring Turkey, whereby the big Bulgaria was split up, Montenegro was also reduced in area, and the protectorate over Bosnia and Herzegovina was given to Austria-Hungary, and they came back bringing with them "peace with honour," together with a secret Anglo-Turkish Convention which gave us Cyprus, and Turkey our guarantee of the security of her remaining possessions in Asia Minor. Posterity can only regard with a somewhat sardonic amusement—where it does not actually reprobate

—a supposed settlement of the Eastern Question, so soon, so completely torn to pieces.

Our Eastern interests brought us into war only a few years later during a Gladstone administration. At the Treaty of Berlin Bismarck had offered to connive at our annexation of Egypt. Beaconsfield had looked askance upon this suggestion ; but our deep engagements in that country involved a practical control even if we did not desire literal sovereignty. The nationalist rising under Arabi Pasha against the effete and wasteful government of the Khedive, and in part against the rule of the Sultan, and the cry for the protection of the British residents in Egypt against the marauding instincts of the insurgents, in default of any capacity on the part of the native authorities to provide security, led to active British intervention in Egypt. Alexandria was bombarded, and Sir Garnet Wolseley won the battle of Tel-el-Kebir over the forces of Arabi. France had refused to take part in our operations, and this failure to co-operate with us led to the cessation of the system of dual control between Great Britain and France in the country. France sought elsewhere a sphere of influence in Northern Africa, and her attention came to centre in Algeria and Morocco. British interests in the Nile valley almost immediately after the war with Arabi Pasha led to our being involved further up the Nile. The rise of the Mahdi in the Soudan produced Gordon's ill-fated expedition to Khartoum. We made no further progress southward ; but we retained Egypt in virtual single sovereignty.

The imperial tendencies, which are associated with the name of his great rival, were too strong for Gladstone to withstand, however little he might sympathise with them. In South Africa, as well as in the north of the continent,

the British Empire was extending. The Transvaal had been in 1877 declared a crown colony. This had been done under Beaconsfield's administration. Trusting in Gladstone's opposition to Beaconsfield's annexationist policy, the Boers looked to Gladstone's ministry to restore the *status quo ante*. But the Liberal Government did not feel itself able to undertake this. It is difficult "to go back upon" an imperial policy. The Boers secured by action what they could not secure by persuasion—they won back their independence by Majuba. But the dynamic forces of British aggrandizement in South Africa were to prove too strong for them; and the schemes of a Cecil Rhodes left no place at all for the realisation of a great Dutch hegemony in South Africa.

The epoch which saw the sweeping away after the Mutiny of the archaic system of a commercial company's control, and the substitution of an imperial government in India under a Viceroy, representative of the Queen Empress, and which saw marked British expansion in Egypt and in South Africa, is also most significant in the history of the great English-speaking dependencies. Principles of self-government were inaugurated by the famous Durham report on conditions in Canada, which was acted upon in 1840 by Lord John Russell. From that date until after the American Civil War British opinion, centred, as we have seen, upon domestic concerns, had taken little heed of what was going on in the dependencies, and the prevailing feeling had been one of comfortable indifference. The American War produced a change. Opinion at home could not be wholly indifferent to the suggestion made by some firebrands in the North of an invasion of Canada, however idle it may have been; nor, the war over, could it be unconscious of the changed

situation across the Atlantic created by the victory of the North, to whom the feeling of the general public in Great Britain had been, on the whole, hostile. The Canadians themselves at all events were inevitably brought to contemplate a closer union as a safeguard against the potential danger from a greatly aggrandized United States as their southern neighbour. They were influenced, too, by the consideration of the necessity of closer co-operation if the vast territories lying north and west of the Great Lakes and stretching westward to the Pacific were to be exploited and their splendid natural resources utilised. The movement towards a closer union was led by Sir John Macdonald, the Prime Minister of Upper and Lower Canada ; after considerable difficulty his scheme triumphed, not only throughout Canada, but in the mother country, and in 1867 the British North America Act was passed, and Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick were federated together into the Dominion of Canada. By 1873 the vast western province of Manitoba, together with British Columbia and Prince Edward Island, had been incorporated, leaving only Newfoundland outside the Dominion.

Scarcely less notable was the colonial progress in the Antipodes. From 1840 onwards Australia, which had since the days of Captain Cook been regarded as little more than a dumping ground for convicts, ceased, partly owing to the denunciation by Edward Gibbon Wakefield of the system, to be cursed with the evil of transportation. Wool had become a great industry, even in these early bad days of the colony ; but the discovery of gold in the Ballarat district in 1851 led to immigration on a large scale. New colonies came to be created. In 1851 Victoria was severed from New South Wales, and with

Tasmania and South Australia was given a constitution ; in 1859 Queensland followed. Some attempt was made to create a close union between the colonies, various efforts being made from 1856 onward into the eighties without success, though the home government early recommended federation, and there were advocates of federation in Australia also. But the different colonies were really too small and too scattered, and too much separated geographically to learn to pull together all at once, and there was no hostile external pressure to bring home the desirability of closer union as a measure of security.

The first British settlements in New Zealand took place in 1814, but nothing on a large scale was accomplished until after the formation of the New Zealand Association in 1837. The home government took scant interest in these proceedings until French ambitions in the Pacific and the possibility of French annexation of the islands stirred them into activity. In 1839 the Governor of New South Wales declared British jurisdiction over New Zealand, and in the following year, by the so-called treaty of Waitangi, the Maoris ceded sovereignty to Great Britain. From 1843 onwards for several years there was considerable fighting between British troops and the natives ; but eventually the troops were withdrawn ; natives and settlers were left to determine their relations friendly-wise or otherwise. Friendship prevailed, a feeling of mutual respect arose between the races, and they learned to sit side by side in the New Zealand Parliament created in 1852.

England had made one great blunder in her relations with her colonies. It seemed that after a period of scepticism and inertia she had learnt wisdom and, realising a conception of the greatness of her new imperial destiny,

was beginning to rise to its level. But in these same years the much nearer problem of Ireland baffled her. The heritage of the centuries was heavy. The system of exploiting native Ireland for the benefit of Great Britain ; of subordinating her economic interests to those of Great Britain, of managing the country for the advantage of the alien few, in fine, the system of the "English Pale"—coming down from the Tudors, made more hateful by the memory of Cromwellian persecution and the Revolution confiscations—all this produced an alienation and bitterness, for which compensation could not easily and quickly be made. There had been no attempt to create an union of hearts. Disraeli once said that the problem of Ireland was that of "a starving people, an alien Church, and an absentee aristocracy." The phrase admirably summed up the situation. The essential troubles of Ireland in the nineteenth century were famine, religious differences, and an unjust agrarian system. The third was the most fundamental. In a great agricultural country the native cultivator of the soil had no personal interest in the land he walked on ; the landlords were of an alien race, for the most part not even living in the country, drawing rents, but not otherwise interested in their property. The power of the English landlord class, rooted in land-ownership, was omnipresent, all-engrossing. They controlled all Ireland. They filled all offices, all administrative, all political posts ; they had at their back the full support of Parliament, of the military, the police. Their subjects, the native Irish, were rack-rented, subject to frequent eviction, maintained in a constant condition of poverty and semi-starvation, dependent on the potato crop for their sustenance, dwelling for the most part in wretched hovels. It may have been the case that many were

content with such abject conditions, thriftless and lazy, and careless of the morrow, incapable of self-improvement. The blame attaching to the ruling class was the greater, not the less, for that.

The second half of the eighteenth century had seen many important improvements, a sincere attempt at reform. The American War of Independence had caused England to review the question of her relationship to the nearest of her dependencies ; the enforced withdrawal of troops from Ireland to meet elsewhere the danger of the French war, and the risk of an invasion of Ireland had led to the organisation of the Irish Volunteer movement, which in the circumstances had become so powerful that its demands for the abolition of the trade restrictions on Irish industry and the creation of an independent parliament could no longer be resisted. In 1780 the economic restrictions were withdrawn, and two years later Poynings' Law was repealed and Ireland obtained a legislature of her own. There seemed to be a rosy future ahead for "Grattan's" Parliament. Unhappily the period of Ireland's legislative independence coincided with the outbreak of revolution on the Continent. The influence of the French Revolution led to the formation of an extremist party under Wolfe Tone. The "United Irishmen" became in brief course a definitely treasonable association, aiming at a complete severance between Ireland and Great Britain. It intrigued with the French and connived at Hoche's expedition of 1796. The activity of the United Irishmen had one further ill-result. In the eyes of their opponents Roman Catholicism and treason in Ireland became confounded ; religious and political difficulties became embittered, and a rival Protestant association was formed, that of the Orangemen. The

Orangemen indulged in a campaign of cruelty against their Romanist brethren. The ignorant peasantry became persuaded that nothing short of their extermination was being aimed at, and joined in the Irish Rebellion of 1798, which came to an abortive and inglorious end at Vinegar Hill.

The consequence of these most unfortunate events was that Pitt became persuaded that nothing could secure the continued connection between Great Britain and Ireland save the restoration of the legislative union. The Union accordingly came in 1801, secured by intense corruption in Ireland, and accompanied by the promise of Catholic Emancipation, a promise which owing to the conscientiousness or pig-headedness of George III. was not fulfilled. The dominance of the absentee landlord class and of Dublin Castle were once more riveted on Ireland.

The great leader of the Irish cause after Grattan is Daniel O'Connell. At first concerning himself mainly with the questions of Catholic disabilities and the payment of tithe to an alien church, he ended by concentrating his attention on a crusade for a return to the principle of Home Rule, as the solvent of Ireland's difficulties. The movement was assuming great proportions when Peel had its leader prosecuted for sedition and imprisoned. The fall of O'Connell was soon followed by the outbreak of the great Irish famine of 1845-6 owing to the complete failure of the potato crop. The corn crop did not fail, but although the population was starving the export of corn was continued, and the government made no attempt to retain the Irish harvest for the benefit of its miserable producers. The Great Famine marks an epoch in Irish history. The entire situation became exacerbated. The conditions in the unhappy country were appalling, with hundreds of

thousands dying from want of food, and housing conditions execrable. The government added another two and a half millions to the taxation of Ireland. It was not only a miserable, but a rapidly decreasing, population that had to pay these added burdens which went into the English exchequer, not necessarily at all for the benefit of Ireland, for the government recognised no obligation to expend the money of an impoverished country on its own requirements. The emigration, which began in consequence of the Great Famine on a large scale, has continued ever since. In 1841 there were over eight million inhabitants in Ireland ; sixty years later only four. The decrease has been steady. Another disastrous consequence of the famine was that a feeling of indignant exasperation at the apparent callousness or ineptitude of the British Government in the face of the tragic condition of the country inevitably resulted in the formation of extremist parties, such as the "United Irishmen" had been—most important of them the Fenian Society—who were often frankly disloyal and aimed at entire separation, and for them English opinion naturally could find only reprobation. Alienation between the two countries tended to increase. Sometimes when there appeared some chance of a better understanding some particularly revolting outrage, such as the murder of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke in Phœnix Park, in 1882, would make the situation worse than ever. The policy of the British Government was, alternately, one of drift and of coercion. Consistent principle and constructive statesmanship there were none. No attempt was made to tackle the problem until in 1869 Gladstone succeeded in passing an Act disestablishing the Anglican Church in Ireland.

In the following year Gladstone went on to deal with

the worst sore of all, the Land Problem, and especially the scandal of evictions which, bad before, had been more rampant than ever in the years following the famine. The Land Act of 1870 placed the landlords under an obligation to compensate their tenants on ejection save when due to non-payment of rent, and also for any improvements the tenant had made resulting in the increased value of the holding. It was a movement in the right direction, but it did not go nearly far enough. Not compensation for eviction, but security against eviction was wanted. Ten years later ejectments were as bad as they had ever been. In 1880 there were over 10,000 cases ; in 1881 nearly 18,000. The Irish had ere this decided to take the law into their own hands. In 1879 had been formed the Land League, which had been carrying on a policy of intimidation and boycott against its opponents. Another and greater force had come into Irish politics in 1875 with the appearance of Charles Stewart Parnell, perhaps the most outstanding figure in the history of Ireland in the century. His resounding declaration, made in his first speech in Parliament, "Ireland is a nation," at once struck the keynote of his policy, and was the war-cry of his followers, the Nationalist party. Forced to fight the battle of his country in Westminster instead of at Dublin, Parnell resolved to make the Imperial Parliament pay, to force it to pay, attention to the Irish Question every day of its existence. He brought the policy of obstruction to a fine art. The years 1880 and 1881 were years of intense commotion in Irish affairs. The government answered the campaign of the Land League by a suspension of Habeas Corpus and by bestowing upon the police the power of promiscuous arrest on suspicion. The Nationalists at Westminster fought the government with a fierce

indignation and tumultuous violence. They were suspended, Parnell himself imprisoned.

Urged not by the fury of Land Leaguers and Nationalists, but by his own sense of the justice and necessity of the case, and seeing in mere repression no solution of the Irish troubles at all, in 1881 Gladstone had supplemented his previous Land Act by a second, this having as its object the securing of fixity of tenure for the Irish tenants and setting up a land court to determine rents. Gladstone took his next step in 1884, when he incorporated in his Reform Act provisions which gave the Irish the franchise on the same scale as it existed in England, the electorate being increased from 200,000 to 500,000, and secured far more effective representation at Westminster than heretofore. In spite of this the zeal of the Nationalist party for Home Rule in no way abated. The party swept the country in the election at the end of 1885, securing an overwhelming majority over their opponents, and making Parnell "uncrowned King of Ireland" indeed. Convinced that the demand for Home Rule was not merely a "Nationalist" but a national demand, Gladstone declared his conversion to that policy and introduced his first Home Rule Bill in April, 1886. The Bill was thrown out and the Liberal party disrupted on the question of Irish policy. Hartington, Chamberlain, and Bright deserted their leader and the Liberal-Unionist party was formed.

Gladstone returned to office—this being his fourth administration—in 1892, and introduced his second Home Rule Bill, which was thrown out in the House of Lords in the following year. When in 1894 Lord Rosebery succeeded him for a brief space of power, he abandoned Home Rule as part of the constructive programme of the Liberal party, as being impracticable, pending the conversion of the

“predominant partner.” But, generally speaking, the period 1886–1906 is one of Conservative ascendancy, and for the greater part of the time—up to 1902—is dominated by the great figure of the Conservative statesman, Lord Salisbury. Perhaps the most immediately practical result of Gladstone’s Irish campaign had been that, in formulating a perfectly definite Irish policy, he had forced upon his Unionist opponents the necessity of producing an alternative, something more than mere coercion, a scheme of reform. The Conservative plan was, while maintaining resolute central control at Dublin Castle, and withholding the right of central determination from the Irish people, to administer the country with a new thoroughness in its own interests. No longer were the interests of Ireland to be subordinated to those of Great Britain. No longer was Irish revenue to be utilised for external purposes. An agricultural board was instituted to develop the resources of the soil; a Congested Districts Board was created with a view to improving the conditions of holdings amid the bogs and desolation of Galway and Connemara. In 1898 for the first time local government on the English model was brought into being by the introduction of County and District Councils. These and other similar measures, initiated by a Unionist administration, indicated that—however far off the true solution of the Irish problem might yet be—at all events a complete change of view as regards Ireland had taken place in Great Britain, that the idea of the selfish political and economic suppression of Ireland for the benefit of her more powerful partners had perished; that the idea of obligation towards Ireland had taken its place.

Apart from Irish affairs domestic politics during the second half of the nineteenth century were, on the whole,

distinctly unexciting. The period, however, contains two great Parliamentary Reform Acts, supplements and developments of the original Act of 1832. The first of these was directly due to the social and economic changes which the great prosperity engendered by the Industrial Revolution had produced by the middle of the century—the much greater diffusion of wealth, the emergence of large new classes into consequence due to their experience and success in the commercial world. No longer were there just the two clearly defined classes in industry—the great capitalist and the dependent employee. There were large numbers of independent prosperous middle-class traders and manufacturers on a small scale. And the working-man was no longer, as we have seen, wholly dependent; he was learning the lesson of combination and recognising the possibilities of political power in class cohesion. The days of the “bourgeois” system, inaugurated by the Reform Act of 1832, were passing away. The rigid Toryism of Wellington and the rigid Benthamitism of Nassau Senior were alike becoming effete. The England which cheerfully acquiesced in the parliamentary predominance of such aristocratic leaders as Melbourne, Peel, and Palmerston was rapidly disappearing. The Chartist and similar popular movements may have been abortive, but they were indications of an irresistible movement towards a more democratic system. The death of Palmerston in 1865 closed an epoch. Next year Gladstone proposed an extension of the franchise. The Bill was lost, and a Tory Government came in under Lord Derby. But the evidence of the demand of the people for parliamentary reform was too strong to be gainsaid. Great mass meetings of working men, meetings of trade unions and co-operative societies took place all over the country.

Disraeli, in the hope of enlisting the suffrages of new voters for his party, if it introduced the measure which he saw to be inevitable in 1867, took his famous "leap in the dark." Toryism allied itself with democracy and was in the next decades to prove its natural sympathy with some of those collectivist ideas, which were destined in the future to appeal to the working man far more forcibly than Gladstonian Liberalism. As the result of the act a distinct change in the character of Members of Parliament, especially in their social standing, began to be apparent. "The working classes," said Lord Shaftesbury, "have become patrons instead of clients, and they both can and do fight their own battles." In 1885 Gladstone carried a third Parliamentary Reform Act, which introduced uniformity in regard to both the householders' and lodgers' votes as between borough and county, merged boroughs of under 15,000 inhabitants into counties, gave only one member to towns of 50,000 population and under, and two to those under 165,000, and added 2,000,000 names to the registers. One other great constitutional reform must just be mentioned—the Ballot Act of 1872, conceding one of the principal "revolutionary" demands of the Chartists.

The previous year had seen the abolition of religious tests at the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. In 1871-2 Cardwell carried through the very important Army reforms associated with his name, abolishing the scandalous system of buying commissions and instituting the short-service system. In 1873 another very important reform of a different character was obtained through the efforts of Lords Selborne, Coleridge, and Cairns, namely, the Judicature Act, which re-arranged our judicial machinery on a greatly improved basis. Already a series of beneficial measures had done much to sweep away the delays,

anomalies and immense expensiveness of the courts, especially the old Court of Chancery, as made familiar by Dickens in *Bleak House*. Now the Supreme Court was rearranged with some approximation to logic. The period is notable in the history of educational progress, and of the growth of the conception that the education of the people was the concern, and indeed the duty, of the state. It is also most notable in the development of Local Government, for the Local Government Act of 1888 and the creation of Parish Councils in 1894. As a result of these measures the maintenance of public works, the control of public health and housing were placed in the hands of borough, county, urban district and parish councils, working under the general supervision of the Local Government Board.

In all this there is as yet no clear conception of an obligation on the part of the government to undertake a definite consistent policy of national amelioration with a distinctly envisaged goal in view. But the tendency towards state intervention is perfectly obvious, however unconscious successive governments may have been of it. The process was effected for the most part by forces outside Parliament—by the ever-increasing organisation of labour, the rapid development of Trade Unionism, acquiring larger and larger funds, becoming more and more conscious of potential political as well as economic power, and tending to formulate more and more distinctly a decided political creed, which saw in a government not merely an agency for the protection of society, but the motive power for the creation of a new society. A few significant dates may be cited as instancing the activity and influence of these powerful forces. In 1880 a piece of legislation was introduced, precursor of many similar measures indicative

of the principle of state-intervention on behalf of the worker, viz., the Employers' Liability Bill, intended to establish the workers' right to compensation for accidents due to negligence on the part of employer or foreman. Seventeen years later a further development of this came in the Workmen's Compensation Act. In 1881, following the publication of Henry George's advocacy of the single tax on rent in lieu of all existing taxes, Alfred Russel Wallace founded a Land Nationalisation Society, the principle of which was a few years later formally adopted by a Trade Union Congress. In 1881; again, Morris and Hyndman founded their Social Democratic Federation. The public mind was being stirred to a realisation of the "slum problem," of the close juxtaposition in London and other great towns, often in adjoining streets, of ostentatious wealth and the most abject poverty. In 1884 a Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes sat under the presidency of Sir Charles Dilke. In 1890 appeared General Booth's remarkable work, *In Darkest England and the Way Out*; while the long careful investigations of the problems of poverty and housing in London by Charles Booth were published between 1889 and 1897. In 1890 a Housing of the Working Classes Act was passed, by which public bodies were given compulsory powers to buy land and build houses. In this year, again, a demonstration of the solidarity of the power of Labour was afforded by an International Labour Congress meeting at Berlin. In 1897 appeared the great joint work of Sidney and Beatrice Webb, *Industrial Democracy*, elucidating the principles of English Trade Unionism, and advocating the state organisation of labour. In the nineties, which saw the beginnings of the Independent Labour Party, the forces of Labour were

discussing, and endeavouring to arrange for, the direct representation of their interests by a definite organised Labour party in the House of Commons. These efforts bore their full fruits in 1906.

There was thus during the last two decades of the century a great ferment of new ideas and the most significant feeling towards an enlarged conception of the scope of government and suggestions of fundamental, social, and political reconstruction. Yet, apart from the London Dockers' Strike, led by John Burns, in 1889, and an abortive strike for an eight-hours' day among the engineers in 1897, they were years of industrial peace. And the general atmosphere of the country was on the whole one of placid contentment. This was largely owing undoubtedly to the very great wealth and prosperity of the period, the general diffusion of comfort, and the cheapness of living. Remarkable in 1850, this was very much greater in 1900. The bulk of the population were well off. And so, notwithstanding the marked growth of forces which presaged much questioning and dissatisfaction in the near future, the mind of the majority of the British people was, for the most part, accurately reflected by the Conservative Government which held sway during the best part of the period. Its domestic policy was sufficiently in accordance with the trend of political thought, which was clearly but not aggressively in the direction of collectivism. The eye of the superficial observer is more easily caught by Lord Randolph Churchill's "Tory Democracy" and the beginnings of the Primrose League than by the far more significant movements in the sphere of Labour and Trade Unionism. Again, the period is not self-evidently one of social change; it is obviously and pre-eminently imperialistic.

Disraeli's imperialism had had an Asiatic glamour ; the cynosure of all eyes in the days of Salisbury was Africa. The other great representative names in this phase of our imperial history are Rudyard Kipling and Cecil Rhodes. The great dream and ambition of the imperialist was the Cape to Cairo Railway. From the Cape to the Congo we dominated Southern Africa ; in the north we had our hold over Egypt. But Africa was the cynosure of other eyes than ours. France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, Portugal, were all interested. An attempt was made by amicable agreement to partition the vast continent among the great European powers. We came into conflict in 1887 with Portugal over Mashonaland, and next year with France over Madagascar. In 1890 agreements as regards Madagascar, Nigeria, and Zanzibar were made with France ; as regards Nyasaland and Rhodesia with Portugal. Our relations with France were none too friendly in these years. The old dispute about the Newfoundland fisheries, legacy of the Treaty of Utrecht, still had power to rankle. More serious was a difference of opinion as regards Egypt. The joint control had come to an end ; Great Britain was still in possession. In 1890 the government made an offer to evacuate Egypt with the proviso that we should be allowed to interfere in the case of any danger arising which threatened the security of that country. France and Russia refused the proviso. In 1898 Sir Herbert Kitchener won the victory of Omdurman over the Khalifa and restored the Soudan to Egypt ; France viewed with jealousy this British move into the regions of the Upper Nile. In July, 1898, Major Marchand, setting out from the French Congo, arrived at Fashoda, and hoisted the French flag. Kitchener and Marchand met. We seemed to be on the brink of war with France when Marchand was recalled by

his government. Next year a friendly agreement was arrived at between the two powers defining the southern frontiers of Egyptian territory.

But the most significant feature of the history of British Africa during the Salisbury period was that for the first time we were brought into conflict with the great new power of the German Empire. From about 1875 onwards the leading German merchants, particularly those of Hamburg and Bremen, were constantly impressing upon their government the necessity of the acquisition of colonial possessions in order to provide an outlet for the rapidly increasing population and wealth of the country. It was not until after the conclusion of the Triple Alliance, when he became thoroughly assured of the security of Germany's position in Europe, that, in 1883 or 1884, Bismarck showed any favour to these schemes. Henceforward they had his support. This year saw the German colony of South-West Africa properly established ; in 1885 Germany made her gains in the Cameroons ; between 1884 and 1890 in East Africa. Each German advance involved a dispute with Great Britain as regards spheres of influence. In 1884 a press campaign against her was organised in Berlin, and feeling ran rather high on both sides. But we wanted to get rid of German opposition to our occupation of Egypt and the recognition of German right to the coast-line of her South-West African colony did not seem too high a price. On the other hand, the German attempt to establish herself at St. Lucia Bay to the north of Zululand, owing to the pressure of colonial opinion, was promptly resisted, and a small warship, *Goshawk*, sent to keep the British flag flying there. Generally speaking, however, friendly agreement was the policy of the British government. Both Salisbury and Gladstone looked on the

attempt at German colonisation as a natural, and indeed, a laudable enterprise. Said the latter : " If Germany is to become a colonising power, all I can say is : God speed her. She becomes an ally and partner in the execution of the great purposes of Providence for the advantage of mankind." There was not the slightest disposition in either of the great British political parties to thwart Germany's colonial aspirations. Salisbury was consistently well disposed towards Berlin, and in 1890 was concluded the important settlement of all African boundary disputes between Great Britain and Germany, which surrendered Heligoland to the latter. The island was of no apparent use to us ; if held by Germany it might be converted into a fine harbour of refuge for ships traversing the North Sea. The cession seemed at the time a small price to pay for the peaceful settlement of disputes which might easily have found no solution save in bloodshed. Now the relations between the two countries seemed firmly established on a friendly footing. Nevertheless their relations, in point of fact, became very much strained between 1890 and the death of Queen Victoria. The careful pilot having been dropped from the ship, the young ruler of Germany, William II., was indulging in infinitely more luxuriant dreams than those which had been entertained by the old Chancellor, to whom the making of the modern German Empire had been due. Not merely a European Empire, not merely the acquisition of a few colonies in the Dark Continent, was the Kaiser's vision. It was a vision of *Welt politik*, of an empire extending all over the globe, and great upon the seas. The Germans were thinking of colonies in other parts of the world besides Africa. They had already acquired Samoa and New Guinea in the Pacific ; in South America they looked

hungrily at Brazil. After the war between Japan and China, ending in the complete defeat of China in 1897, Germany seized Kiao-Chao. But still the eyes of the German imperialists were fixed most especially on Africa, and not a little on South Africa. Majuba had been hailed with satisfaction in Germany, and undoubtedly the two Boer republics looked towards her for sympathy and protection. President Krüger compared the relations of Germany to the republics to the natural ties between father and child.

In 1895 the dissatisfaction of Uitlanders in the Transvaal had become intense. It is true that they were there of their own accord, lured by the mines, and certainly not by Boer invitation: on the other hand, their energy and initiative were filling the formerly empty exchequer of the republic, while they themselves were heavily taxed, hampered by unequal laws, by ignorant and bigoted officials. They demanded the franchise, a share of political rights and power. The demand was refused. Cecil Rhodes connived at the expedition of Doctor Jameson, Administrator of Rhodesia, into the Transvaal to support the Uitlanders. The raid was as ignominiously disastrous in result as it had been scandalously disgraceful in design. Immediately the Kaiser sent a telegram to Krüger congratulating him upon the fact "that you and your people have succeeded by your own energy, without appealing to the aid of friendly powers, in defeating" the raid. The Kaiser had contemplated sending that aid. Possibly the famous telegram expressed rather relief that this course had been avoided than a provocative threat. In any case, the telegram naturally was highly resented in England.

British relations with the Transvaal Republic did not

improve after the Jameson raid. The Boers were persuaded by the raid itself, perhaps even more by our having cut them off from an outlet to the sea by our annexation of the coast, that their independence was directly threatened. The controversy over the question of the status of the Uitlanders continued without solution ; the Transvaal, now joined by the Orange Free State, prepared its armaments and made ready for war, undoubtedly hoping for German support. The second Boer War started in October, 1899. Germany did not intervene : but Anglophobia among her people was roused to fever-pitch. In 1897 the Kaiser had taken the initial steps in his campaign for the creation of a great navy ; in that year Admiral von Tirpitz had become Secretary of the Admiralty. The following year there had been passed the first German Navy Law, with a most ambitious programme of warship construction. The Kaiser and the Navy League utilised the anti-British frenzy engendered by the Boer War to have introduced in 1900 a second Navy Act, considerably accelerating the previous naval programme. The portentous German challenge to British naval supremacy had been emphatically sounded. It was not only by Germany that we were hated in these last days of the nineteenth century and at the opening of the twentieth. The great European powers generally had little love for us. The hostility of France and Russia was only less than that of Germany. We enjoyed a position of splendid isolation, without commitments certainly, but also without friends. This sturdy independence, conceived by many as splendidly as well as typically British, was no doubt popular enough at the time, and Lord Salisbury's foreign policy, in so far as it was thought about at all, had the sanction of national

approval. But, indeed, foreign policy was but little discussed at all. Lord Salisbury, with an immense prestige as the most eminent diplomatist in Europe, had succeeded not merely in keeping foreign polities in the serene untroubled atmosphere of the Upper House, but in removing them altogether from the sphere of the party conflict, almost from the sphere of criticism. He had come near to creating a convention, a tradition that foreign policy was not a matter for parliamentary investigation at all, but the exclusive concern of the few initiated, the experts, the diplomats. It looked as though the nation, on the whole, was well content that it should be so.

Superficially, perhaps, it looked as though the bulk of the nation was well content with most things as they were. In spite of the war, the burden of which had scarcely been felt, the country at the death of the old Queen was still immensely prosperous. The disasters of the early stages of the war had only served to make patriotism stronger, and there was a great fund of imperialist fervour, though it may not have been of a very exalted order. The people of this great empire, so proud of its independence, its splendid isolation, seemed satisfied, happy, united as they had not been before in all the long years of the Victorian era. Another decade, and how complete, how striking a contrast!

In the religious life of the country during the second half of the century the general reaction against high and dry individualism had also been marked. Such a reaction had indeed been apparent before the fifties; for instance, in the endeavours of the Christian Socialists, such as Charles Kingsley and Frederick Denison Maurice. From one aspect the Oxford movement was also significant of the reaction. While protesting against the rationalism and

the aloofness characteristic of the English Church at the beginning of the century, it emphasised the corporate nature of the Church. One of the most distinctive features of Anglicanism since the Counter-Reformation movement has been the development of community life, achieved most notably at Cowley and at Mirfield, as also in the Sisterhoods started by Pusey, of which the first important one was that of St. Saviour's, Osnaburgh Street. Fourteen out of the thirty-eight nurses who went with Florence Nightingale to the Bosphorus hospitals were sisters from Anglican communities.

But the most significant feature of the English Church in this period was undoubtedly its comprehensiveness. While there was no attempt to absorb any dissenting denominations, on the other hand, the Established Church succeeded in retaining within her own communion many of the most diverse schools of religious thought—evangelical, broad-church, and high-church. The earliest legal decisions in the ritual controversy seemed to suggest that the last would find it difficult to remain within the fold, but the verdict of the Archbishops in 1899, when, while pronouncing against the use of incense and processional lights, they left each diocesan free to enforce the archiepiscopal “opinion” or not as he pleased, removed this difficulty. Similarly there was reason at one time to doubt whether the evangelicals could easily remain, but the Gorham judgment of 1850 removed that difficulty also. The condemnation of *Essays and Reviews*, by Convocation, in 1860, and the excommunication of Colenso by the Bishop of Capetown for his work on the Pentateuch in 1862, made the position of broad-churchmen precarious. But certain judgments of the Privy Council in 1864 gave a legal sanction, at all events, to the claim to criticize

dogma, and the party, which included Jowett, Mark Pattison, and Temple, remained not the least influential in the Church of England.

Indeed, this type of churchman, it may well be maintained, was called for by the theological situation created by Darwinism and Comtism. The first instinct was to do battle with the theory of evolution as contrary to the Word of God in Scripture, as Wilberforce did in public debate with Huxley at Oxford in 1860. But there was another way to answer the scientific agnostics, who either openly or implicitly attacked Christian Revelation—that of the Higher Criticism, viz., the utilisation of the scientific method in defence of the fundamental dogmas of Christianity, if it involved the abandonment of the thesis of the literal inspiration of the Bible. One outcome of the movement of Biblical criticism was the issue in 1881 of the Revised Version, which, if it corrected some of the erroneous translations, was far from being a substitute for the literary magnificence, of the Authorised Version. More important was the work of the abler scholars of the broad-church school in combating the idea that there was no choice except between agnosticism and obscurantism, in maintaining that there was no necessary incompatibility between science and faith.

Each of the chief parties in the English Church in its own way justified its presence there by the distinctive work it was able to perform in her service. The result of this multiform activity was that the Church was freeing itself from subservience to the state, becoming independent of secular polities. It is noteworthy that a campaign against Erastianism had been made also in Scotland, where the Free Church owed its origin to the secession of Chalmers, Guthrie, Hugh Miller, and nearly 500 others from the

Established Church in 1843 over the question of patronage. English Nonconformity produced men of quite outstanding character and weight, most notably in Charles Spurgeon, a preacher of inspired eloquence ; R. W. Dale, a great champion of the political rights of Dissent, but even greater as a theologian, as his work on the Atonement showed ; J. Martineau, the greatest of English Unitarians, never a numerous body, but most prominent in Birmingham, Liverpool, and Manchester.

In 1877 William Booth, who since 1865 had been working in the East End of London, created the Salvation Army. Its work was largely of a social character. The social and philanthropic work of religious bodies is indeed even more important in this than in the previous period—for example, that of the Church Army, of mission settlements like Oxford House, Mansfield House, and those of the great public schools, and that of “slum” churches. There should also be mentioned here the beneficent activities of many institutions, not necessarily connected with any religious body, for the relief of distress and suffering or the provision of clean company and healthy amusement for those situated in unpropitious surroundings, such as—to mention only a few—the voluntarily supported hospitals, the Charity Organisation Society, Dr. Barnardo’s Homes, the Y.M.C.A. In the unselfish and devoted labours of workers in these and other similar spheres has been contained much of the strongest and finest elements in the nation’s life.

## CHAPTER III

### LANDMARKS IN RECENT HISTORY

#### “L’ENTENTE CORDIALE” (1901-1914)

THE Balfour administration was a brief interlude between the comparative restfulness and contentment of the Salisbury period and the coming of those troublous times which, in international affairs, led to the Great War, and in domestic affairs were filled with industrial unrest. Warnings of approaching storm were indeed beginning to be heard, but as yet only faintly.

The new ministry passed two important legislative enactments—an Education Act and Wyndham’s Irish Land Act. The former was an important progressive measure in the organisation and unification of our system of national education, most unhappily clouded in sectarian controversy, the latter a measure equally progressive in its own sphere, in continuation of a system of land-purchase in Ireland, inaugurated in 1870, but really set in practice by the “Ashbourne Act” of 1885, by which an advance of five millions was made for this purpose, and an Act of 1891 which created a special Land stock to be used in this way. By the Act of 1903 advances in cash were made to tenants to purchase their holdings under the supervision of Estates’ Commissioners, the money being raised by the issue of Land Stock at  $2\frac{3}{4}$  per cent. The short life of the Unionist Government was due in the first place to the Colonial Preference crusade of Chamberlain, which

split the party into hostile camps. Chamberlain's leading motive in this campaign was the welding together of the British Empire into a closer unity in view of the threat of international troubles in the future; but the economic aspect of the question speedily became predominant, and the issue became a broad one of economic policy between Free Trade and Protection. The second factor in bringing about the downfall of the Balfour Cabinet was the rapidly growing influence of progressive—and especially Labour—opinion throughout the country. The tendency of public opinion, indeed, became so unmistakable, particularly as revealed in by-elections, that Mr. Balfour took the unprecedented course of resigning office without defeat in Parliament during a recess.

It is, however, mainly in respect of foreign relations that the first years of Edward VII.'s reign are of interest. We came very near to the brink of war with Russia in the autumn of 1904 over the incident of Admiral Rossetzovsky and the Dogger Bank fishermen. But the intensely significant fact regarding our foreign policy is that with the accession of Edward VII. our "*splendid isolation*" came to an end. Notwithstanding the national *penchant* for independence, our isolation during the Boer War had not been at all enviable; to be regarded with unfriendly eyes by all the great powers of Europe is at least uncomfortable and obviously fraught with serious danger. There were two possibilities alternative to the maintenance of our existing position, and the choice between them was momentous—either to attempt to remove our potential differences with all powers alike and remain aloof; or else to seek positive friendship and alliance with one country or another. With the greater powers of Europe divided into two great combinations—that of France

and Russia on the one hand, the Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy on the other—the adoption of the second plan involved definitely taking sides. The former policy might well appear impracticable. Great Britain was the foremost power in the world ; her commerce, her possessions, her naval supremacy, marks for envy. While our troops were away in South Africa schemes had certainly been afloat for our despoiling. To transform such envy into friendship in the midst of two mutually hostile camps—to obtain it for nothing—is not possible, with the spirit of belligerency abroad.

Once the choice had been made, and it was decided that Great Britain could no longer, trusting in her insular situation, maintain the independent position which she had maintained practically unbroken since the days of Canning, with which combination was she to take side ?

In 1899 Chamberlain had conceived the idea of a triple alliance between Great Britain, the United States and Germany ; and in the spring of 1901 Baron von Eckardstein, German *chargé d'affaires* in London, had suggested, apparently without authorization, an alliance between Great Britain, Japan, and Germany. In October of the same year there had been informal discussions between the British and German Governments with a view to an alliance safeguarding the possessions of either power all over the world save in Asia. Nothing had come of these suggestions, except in the case of Japan. Conversations between Lord Lansdowne and Count Hayashi had resulted in the conclusion of the first of our alliances of the new era—this treaty of alliance being extended in scope as the result of the Russo-Japanese War in 1905. Each party undertook to come to the aid of the other if attacked by a third power ; and, in the second treaty, the object of the

alliance was declared to be "the consolidation and maintenance of general peace in the regions of eastern Asia and of India." Anxiety on account of our eastern possessions had been our motive in entering into an agreement with Japan ; and when in the second treaty India, which had not been included in the first treaty, was brought under the clauses of the alliance, we had done much to safeguard our vital interests in Asia.

The definite choice as between the two opposing forces in Europe was taken when, on the death of Lord Salisbury, Lord Lansdowne obtained full control of foreign affairs. The responsibility for the achievement of the *entente* with France is on the British side mainly his, with the vigorous assistance of such men as Sir Thomas Barclay, who had been working for an understanding with France during Salisbury's lifetime, and the enthusiastic support of King Edward, who by inclination was disposed towards friendship with that nation ; and on the side of France with M. Delcassé, who, despite the Anglophobia which the Boer War had produced just as much in France as in the Fatherland, unhesitatingly and clearly discerned in Germany his country's real and certain foe, in Great Britain a potential ally. There was probably no one in Great Britain whose perception of the menacing tendencies of the German Empire was as clear as Delcassé's, and to the majority of British people, if they gave their mind to the subject at all, the imaginative outpourings of the Pan-Germans with their talk of welding into one compact whole all Teutonism, wherever it might be, including sometimes even Holland and Scandinavia, seemed the merest jargon, not to be taken seriously. But if the fact that at all events the German people itself did take Pan-Germanism seriously was not understood by the British people, the

danger of the naval programme of a Kaiser who dreamed of a German triumph and a future on the water could not but be treated gravely by British statesmen.

The *Entente* with France was finally arranged in 1904, and the differences which had divided the two countries, some of them serious, were swept away. The old dispute about the Newfoundland fisheries was settled by the French rights being bought out ; spheres of influence were mapped out in Siam ; agreements were come to as regards boundaries in Guinea and on the Gambia, and as regards tariffs in Madagascar. But the really important decision in the treaty of 1904, the kernel of the whole understanding, was that France recognised our position in Egypt and we recognised hers in Morocco. Each country was to have a free hand, as far as the other was concerned, in a portion of Northern Africa—ours to the east, France's in the west.

Morocco has been a fateful word in the history of the events leading up to the Great War ; and its significance was to be shown almost immediately. Germany had certain commercial interests in Morocco ; but her real object on the north-west coast of Africa was a coaling-station. She was extremely badly off for such stations, and her possessions in South-West Africa suffered in consequence. She cast a covetous eye at the Moroccan ports of Agadir and Mogador. But the importance of the Morocco question has been, most of all, due to the fact that Germany used it as a touchstone whereby to test the strength of the forces opposed to her aggrandizement.

The political influence of France in Morocco rested upon two foundations—first, the extravagance and venality of the Sultan's government, which gave France an opportunity of intervening with her loans to the furtherance of order and good administration, which the native government

was incapable of providing; secondly, the approval of her actions by Great Britain, and Spain, and Italy, the last, by a most important arrangement made in December, 1900, having given her consent to French designs in Morocco in exchange for a corresponding recognition by France of *her* interests in Tripoli. From all these negotiations Germany had been omitted, although she had been party to a treaty of 1880 regarding the status of Morocco. It is apparently the case that, when the Anglo-French agreement was made with regard to Morocco, Delcassé omitted to give any official notification to the German government. Germany did not forgive. On March 31st, 1905, the Kaiser landed from his yacht at Tangiers, announcing that he came on a visit to the independent sovereign of a land where all the powers were on an equal footing, a statement which deliberately challenged the especial administrative claims of France. The moment of intervention was adroitly chosen. Germany had completed the naval programme of 1898; France's ally, Russia, had suffered the disastrous defeat of Mukden at the hands of the Japanese. In addition to the open treaties, there had been a secret treaty between France and Spain arranging, in the event of its not proving possible to maintain the *status quo* in Morocco, for a joint partition of the country. Berlin certainly knew of this treaty. Inasmuch as the *status quo* in Morocco, with so effete a rule as that of the Sultan, was obviously most unstable, and the decision as to when it was or was not proved impossible to maintain it apparently rested with the signatory powers, the treaty, to put it mildly, might easily suggest to a hostile critic that it revealed as the true aim of its authors—the partition of the country whenever a favourable opportunity offered. Whether Delcassé's Moroccan policy was honest or otherwise it is as yet

impossible to say ; it was certainly most impolitic. It gave Germany a *casus belli*. France had to choose between war unsupported by her Russian ally and with an indifferent cause on the one hand, and the dismissal of her minister on the other. She was in no position to fight alone ; Delcassé fell. Germany proposed a conference of the powers to review the whole Moroccan question, and the proposal was accepted. She had secured the downfall of her most resolute foe in France, and established her right to be consulted on the question of Morocco. It was a diplomatic triumph ; but at a cost. The attempt to divide France and Great Britain, implicit in her action, had failed in its object. It had the directly contrary effect of bringing the two countries closer together, and it is known that some sort of undertakings were given to France by the Balfour government in regard to naval and military assistance, should she be attacked by Germany.

On the eve of the conference, at Algeciras, the Liberal administration came into office with an overwhelming majority in the House of Commons. In the new parliament there sat twenty-nine Labour members. It was a sign of the times, of the political consequence of the working class, banded together to achieve an economic purpose which inevitably involved a political revolution. The party soon gave a taste of its power, when it succeeded in inducing the government to pass through a measure reversing the decision of the House of Lords in the Taff Vale case in 1901. This measure exempted trade unions from prosecution for torts in the law courts and made their funds immune from claims for damages. However much of personality a trade union might actually have in self-realization and in corporate action, it was not in law to be regarded as a person.

Just as significant as the appearance of the Labour party in the House of Commons was the character of Liberal legislation. There were a few isolated representatives of the old high-and-dry individualism which had once been the creed of Liberalism ; but the new Liberalism was of a very different type, connected with the old through their common humanitarian zeal for reform and for the improvement of the conditions of the masses, but utterly different in its choice of methods. The principle underlying the new Liberal programme was frankly collectivist, and required the constant intervention and supervision of the state. A Patents Act, passed in the early days of the administration, was an essentially protective measure, though passed by a Free Trade government. The state definitely revealed itself in the *rôle* of protector of the poor, guardian of the interests of the worker, in two great undertakings which involved such an increase in the expenditure of the public money as would have utterly horrified not only the Benthamites, but practically all previous governments—namely, Old Age Pensions and Compulsory State Insurance. Under the latter scheme the benefits included sanatorium as well as ordinary medical treatment, payments during illness and disablement, and a special maternity donation. The state revealed itself as guardian of children. The system of free national education was largely extended. Medical inspection for children in the schools was arranged. A Children's Act was passed safeguarding children in a number of different ways. As regards Labour questions, the government definitely accepted the principle that Parliament was competent to control wages—a doctrine which would have scandalised the liberal of the old school, imbued with the notion of the sacredness of the unrestricted bargaining between

employer and employee. Trade Boards were set up in certain industries, and a minimum wage for coal-miners was fixed by statute. By statute also was fixed the working day of the miner—a nominal eight hours. The consummation of the Liberal social policy was the great Budget of Mr. Lloyd-George in 1909, which extended the principle of graduation of income-tax with a super-tax on all incomes of over £5000 a year, while extra duties were placed on spirits, and an entirely new tax was put upon the unearned increment from land.

In all this vast amount of legislation there was a consistent policy and a clear insistence on the necessity for state control of the highly industrialised modern state which has become, on the one hand so complicated, on the other so consolidated, that for both reasons corporate action is essential if the elaborate activities of the community are to work with any smoothness at all. Improvements cannot be left to private judgment and enterprise; government as representing the people as a whole must carry them through. In only one of the directions in which social reform was demonstrated to be urgently needed did the Liberal administration take no steps. Shrinking from the magnitude of the task involved, it did nothing to act on either of the two reports of the great Poor Law Commission of 1905-9. It should incidentally be noted that there is one exception to the policy of centralisation. The project of Welsh Disestablishment, following upon Gladstone's disestablishment of the Church of Ireland, was indication of a Liberal leaning towards a policy of complete disestablishment and the secularisation of the state.

Great social changes such as those achieved by the administration of Campbell-Bannerman and Mr. Asquith

could not take place without involving important constitutional changes. The enormous expansion in the volume of legislation and the increase of parliamentary business led to alteration in procedure with a view to necessary economy of time. The Cabinet became more powerful than ever over the Legislature ; the discipline of the party system became more rigid. The executive side of government was even more intimately affected. All government departments had a great deal more work to do, especially the Board of Trade and Local Government Board. The direct influence of the permanent civil servant tended to become more and more pronounced in policy as well as in details of administration. Lastly, the relations between the two Houses of Parliament were affected. The Upper Chamber, a Unionist stronghold, threw out one Liberal bill after another—first, an Education Bill, then a Plural Voting Bill, and the Licensing Bill of 1908, a courageous attempt by means of compulsory reduction of licenses to deal with one of the most grossly obvious evils of the day. Finally, it was so supremely ill-advised as to reject the Budget of 1909, on the ground that under the guise of a money bill it was really connivance at social revolution. Its claim to throw out any Finance Bill which provided in its opinion social and political effects was nothing less than a claim to equality in matters of finance with the Lower House in contradiction to centuries of precedent. The Liberal governments of Campbell-Bannerman and Mr. Asquith had hitherto been content with such expedients as resolutions and formal protests, but so direct a challenge as this had to be taken up. Against the verdict of a general election the Lords could go no further. They passed the Finance Bill. They could not so escape from the consequences of their former temerity. A new

House of Commons, elected definitely on the constitutional issue passed the Parliament Act of 1911, and the threat to create even the large number of new peers needed to swamp the Unionist majority in their House led to the acceptance by the Lords of a measure which made it impossible for them to reject any money bill in future, and also severely curtailed their vote in ordinary legislation. The Upper House had tried conclusions with the democratic doctrine of the mandate and the authority of the representative chamber, thus aiming a blow at the whole representative system. So short-sighted a policy of reaction had recoiled upon its own head.

The year of the Parliament Act, which saw the solution of its difficulties on the constitutional issue, was in other respects a very serious one. Besides an acute international crisis, there was at the very time that we came to the brink of war a very serious railway strike. In that year there was no fewer than 1462 trade disputes, in which a million workers were involved. In the following year there were a million and a half affected in a similar way. These disputes are of importance far less by reason of the particular questions at issue than because they were symptomatic of a revolt against the capitalist system, of an attempt to establish a new industrial organization. There was a sporadic outbreak of "syndicalism" in Dublin under the leadership of James Larkin. But neither his principles nor his methods found favour in England where the more sober ideas of Trade Unionism prevailed. The other interesting feature with regard to these industrial controversies was the part played by the government in connection with them. In all the most important the government intervened. Left to themselves the two parties in dispute rarely came to a settlement. Their

objects seemed irreconcilable, and neither would give way. Yet, agreement failing, there did not then ensue a fight to a finish. Fights to a finish might occur—as they had in former days—in particular mines or factories ; but when the whole of one of the major industries of the country was involved, a fight to a finish was so serious, affecting the entire community, that the government, as the representative of the community, was bound to come forward as an arbitrator; and, indeed, in trade disputes arbitration soon became one of the principal duties of the Board of Trade, and the name of Sir George Askwith one of the most familiar of names to the general public. In its *rôle* as mediator the government stood for compromise, and it was by compromise that a settlement was usually secured. Some, judging by these results, saw in compulsory arbitration the panacea of all labour troubles ; others, mistrustful, saw in compromise only temporising, and predicted that a pitched battle between the forces of Labour and Capital was sooner or later inevitable.

A minor trouble of the much-harassed Liberal government—yet one having serious possibilities in it—was the militant campaign of the “suffragette” party. What is called the Women’s Movement was quite one of the most important developments of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The number of women forced by economic conditions to earn their own livelihood had enormously increased. No longer could maternity and the domestic work of the home, all-important as these were, be regarded as the sole female contribution to the work of the empire. Women were playing a big part in industry, and the more able and ambitious finding their way into the professions. In response to the requirements of their new position the higher education had made great

strides at Oxford and Cambridge, the newer universities, and at such "public schools" as Cheltenham Ladies' College and Holloway College. The University of London and the Royal University of Ireland were followed by others in granting their degrees to women. Unions of female workers were making noteworthy headway at the opening of the new century. Women were exercising a considerable influence in administration through being allowed to be members of boards of health, municipal and county councils, and boards of poor law guardians. They were admitted into the civil service. To make the recognition of the civic position of women complete there was only needed the grant of the franchise. It was coming to be realised to be the inevitable corollary of the position in the state that the sex had won for itself; and many having in mind particularly the remedying of certain glaring evils of our time from which women especially suffered, such as prostitution and sweated labour, saw in the greater political influence of the sex the surest road to such reforms. The conservative instinct was still strong on the other hand, and there existed an entirely laudable fear lest the new movement might impair the influence of women in the family, where they would always be best able to shape the future of the nation and the race. Nevertheless, the constitutional movement for the securing of full political enfranchisement had made very substantial progress. The progress seemed far too slow to a new "suffragist" party, led by a number of very able women, who unfortunately had among their following a number who were very unbalanced and hysterical. "Militancy" was an endeavour to hasten speed by abandoning the slow and sure method of the appeal to reason for the method of advertisement. To force their movement upon the

attention of a slow-witted public was an entirely justifiable policy ; unfortunately the means adopted were often merely silly and undignified, and often, again, betrayed a spirit of lawlessness, which was the worst possible advertisement for people making a claim for political rights.

The lawlessness evinced by the "suffragette" movement had a much more disastrous counterpart in Ireland. The Liberal Government, after having attempted to solve the Irish problem by a compromise, by the method of devolution in an Irish Councils Bill of 1907, rejected by the Irish as inadequate, became, in 1910, definitely pledged to Home Rule. In 1909 they had achieved one of the greatest triumphs in the history of British statesmanship by the establishment of the Union of South Africa. Boer and Briton stood on equal terms in one political entity—Pretoria the administrative capital, Cape Town the parliamentary. The success of this experiment, whereby former enemies, divided by race and language, formed one community, comparable in character as a self-governing dependency with Canada and Australia, might well seem to suggest that the Union of Nationalists and Ulstermen, who had the same language, and who had often fought side by side in the British army, was no unattainable ideal. But the necessary spirit of goodwill and the willingness to give and take were not present. The Irish question became inextricably involved with a most bitter party conflict in Great Britain. There were those on both sides who deliberately poured oil on a fierce furnace for ignoble and interested motives. The Irish question came to mean the Ulster question, and first the Orangemen, under Sir Edward Carson, then the Nationalists, inevitably following suit, became arrayed as opposing armed forces. The spirit of reason was taboo ;

that of lawlessness was in the ascendant. The partizans viewed the prospect of civil war with apparent equanimity. The situation was discreditable to all concerned, but most of all to those who professed zeal for the constitution while they smuggled in arms in order to withstand it. The climax was reached by the Curragh incident. It is not on the whole surprising that the German ambassador came to the conclusion that we were most unlikely to participate in a foreign war. But the external menace saved us from ourselves, calling forth all that was best in the British people.

Ever since he had assumed office in 1906 Sir Edward Grey had been faced by the serious possibility of war with Germany. Actually while the general election was yet in progress, and before the Cabinet could be got together, the Foreign Minister was asked whether if the Morocco "crisis developed into war between France and Germany we would give armed support." While promising nothing, he replied that, in his opinion, should war be in such circumstances forced on France, public opinion in Great Britain would rally to her support. At the same time, it was agreed that British and French military and naval experts should meet in order to discuss joint action in case of the outbreak of war. Soon afterwards the bulk of the French fleet was withdrawn from the Channel and Atlantic, and concentrated in the Mediterranean.

Another very important consequence of our closer understanding with France at the time of the Algeciras conference was that we were drawn, perhaps inevitably, into co-operation with Russia. Already ere this there had been conversations between Sir Charles Hardinge and the Tsar, in 1905, with a view to clearing up our differences with the great Slavic empire. By August, 1907, a definitive

agreement had been reached. The two powers arranged, as regards Thibet, that her integrity should be respected by both, and that they should have dealings with her only through China, her suzerain ; as regards Afghanistan, that while Great Britain undertook not to alter the political status of the country, Russia should recognise that that country was outside her sphere of influence, and should communicate with her only through Great Britain. It was with respect to Persia that the only serious difficulties in arranging a settlement had arisen. Eventually it had been decided that each power should have a sphere of influence in the country—the Russian in the north, including the large cities of Teheran, Ispahan, and Tabriz : the British south and east stretching to the Beluchistan frontier, and including the Persian Gulf. The Persian settlement was severely criticised by some Liberals, on the ground that it menaced the independence of the country and gave too much power in the most important part of it to Russia. Unfortunately it happened that, as an indirect consequence of the agreement, the best friend that the Persian people had at this period—the American, Mr. Schuster, who came by invitation in 1911 to control the finances and who did much to reform not only finances but administration generally—was expelled from Persia. Mr. Schuster was enthusiastic and energetic ; also tactless. He ignored both Great Britain and Russia in his zeal for the native government, calling on neither of their embassies, and he, incidentally, ignored their agreement regarding spheres of influence. Russia demanded his expulsion because he appointed an Englishman to collect taxes in the Russian area, and the expulsion was approved by Sir Edward Grey. It was a bad day for Persian reform when Mr. Schuster went ; but our agreement with Russia

permitted of no other course. Not only because of the unfortunate consequence in Persia, but simply because it meant an alliance with a corrupt and despotic government, the Entente with Russia was severely criticised by many Liberal and Labour members. They were apt, in dwelling upon the bureaucracy, to forget the Duma.

A new European crisis rose in 1908, when Austria announced her annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, despite the Berlin Treaty. In the previous autumn Count Aerenthal, already notable for his Anti-Slavic propensities in the Dual Monarchy, had been pushing forward a railway project of a line running through Novi-Bazar into Macedonia, cynically purchasing Turkish support at the price of giving Turkey a free hand in Macedonia, *i.e.*, to massacre there to her heart's content. Next came this formal annexation of Balkan territory in defiance of the stipulations of the Treaty of Berlin. The Entente protested; Sir Edward Grey maintaining that any modification of the Treaty of 1878 must be approved by another international congress—using herein the same argument that Germany had used in regard to Morocco and the Treaty of Madrid. The protest did no good. Russia was still very weak; the Kaiser appeared in his shining armour, and won a diplomatic triumph.

Teutonic interest in the Balkan Peninsula was most significant. It is a pity that the significance was not more generally understood at the time. As early as 1898 William II. had visited Palestine, ostensibly to gain concessions for Christian pilgrims to Jerusalem, in reality to make the initial arrangements for the Bagdad Railway, formally authorised by the Porte in 1902, in which year the Kaiser, when on a visit to London, seems to have tried to interest the British government as a participator.

In November, 1906, the Kaiser, once more on an English visit, evidently broached the subject again; and it was for a third time to the fore in 1911. The line taken by British governments throughout appears to have been that if the scheme was purely commercial in character, well and good, but we could not give our concurrence to any undertaking which might menace our position in India. Even so, it is doubtful if the perilousness of the German project was ever fully appreciated. What appeared on the surface was a symptom of Germany's policy of "peaceful penetration," which had for years past been carrying her trade and commerce further and further afield and bringing greater and greater prosperity to German financiers and manufacturers at home. But emphatically the Bagdad Railway was not merely commercial in the eyes of its projectors. The Kaiser's eyes, like those of Napoleon before him, had become dazzled by a vision of the Orient. Originally the champion of Christendom, he had apparently become the patron of Pan-Islamism, which had become the ally of Pan-Germanism. For the connecting link between Germany and the glittering East was to be this great trunk line running from Constantinople across the Turkish Empire in Asia Minor to the Persian Gulf, to be connected at Aleppo with the Hedjaz Railway running to Medina and with the line from Damascus to Cairo. Undoubtedly such a line did threaten our communications with India, and threatened Egypt too. It made German influence strong in that supremely important part of the globe where the three continents meet. Such were the wider ambitions of the great *Mittel-Europa* scheme, which, founded upon the existing subservience of the Hapsburg monarchy to Potsdam, presupposed also Austrian supremacy in the north of the Balkan Peninsula and

German control over Turkey. The emergence in 1908 of the Young Turks, bringing with it the hopes of reform and progress in Constantinople, was a temporary setback to the ascendancy which William II. had secured in the days of Abdul Hamid II. But these hopes were speedily dashed to the ground. Young Turk proved to be only Old Turk writ large. Baron Marschall von Bieberstein, German ambassador at Constantinople, very speedily contrived to restore the German influence to its former authority. Germany was ever at the Young Turks' elbow, suggesting their policy, reorganising their army.

If the thoroughness of the German programme and the full seriousness of the German menace to the peace of Europe, as exemplified by her Turkish dealings, was not entirely apparent, the danger to international peace of the immense armaments which made all Europe an armed camp was apparent to all : and the Campbell-Bannerman government from the outset strove to call a halt, as far, at all events, as naval construction—in which we were chiefly interested—was concerned. The government announced our wish to discuss the reduction of armaments at the next Hague Conference ; Reventlow's interpretation of this being, "When England had invented the Dreadnought, she wished to make use of the Conference to arrest competition," an inference, which, however wide of the mark, might in the circumstances have been formed quite honestly. No agreement with regard to the naval rivalry between the two powers could be reached. If Germany could be suspicious of our motives, we might well suspect those of the power which, already the greatest military nation in the world, now made a bid for the same position by sea, which ruled out the question of reduction of armaments from the agenda of the Hague Conference.

and came forward at intervals during international disputes in the *rôle* of bully and braggart. It was not only in shipbuilding that Germany was increasing her weapons of war. There was increasing activity at Krupp's about the time of the Bosnian crisis, and the building of strategic railways went on all the time. And if on the succession of Bülow by Bethmann-Hollweg as German Chancellor in July, 1909, proposals were made by Germany for a retardation in naval construction, they were proposals of a sort that Great Britain could not entertain. There were other discussions of a similar nature the following year, and still others in progress when the Agadir crisis took place.

Ere that, in 1910, a curious and somewhat sinister event had taken place in the meeting of the Kaiser and the Tsar at Potsdam, when the latter gave his approval to the Bagdad Railway scheme, even consenting to connect it up with Russian lines through Persia. At the same time the Kaiser recognised Russia's projects in northern Persia. These personal agreements might well suggest doubts as to the solidarity of the Triple Entente. Was the Tsar of all the Russias a traitor to his obligations towards France ?

The Agadir crisis was brought on by the despatch of a French military expedition to Fez, justified on the pretext of insurrection around the capital and the necessity of protecting both the Sultan himself and the European residents against the insurgents. Germany, at Algeciras, had agreed that France should police the interior of the unhappy country ; France had agreed to respect its integrity. Seeing that at the same time that the expedition went to Fez, Spain in accordance with the secret Franco-Spanish treaty occupied certain places on

the coast, was France merely keeping order or was she menacing Moroccan integrity? In any case did her action endanger the German industrial and commercial interests in Morocco, which she had undertaken to respect? Anyhow, Germany protested, maintaining that the French expedition was bound to alter the *status quo*. The *Panther* gunboat arrived at Agadir on July 3rd. Once more the Morocco situation was to be made the touchstone of the European situation. On July 21st, Mr. Lloyd George made the speech at the Mansion House in which we definitely threatened war. The speech exasperated opinion in Germany. But war was averted, and this time Germany suffered a diplomatic defeat.

She suffered another severe defeat when, Turkey having been weakened the previous autumn by the Italian attack on Tripoli, the genius of Venizelos in 1912 produced the Balkan League of Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro, and Greece, which led to the utter defeat of Turkey, brought to a humiliating peace on the lines of Chatalja. The prospects of the Mittel-Europa dream seemed black. Most unhappily the peace congress which assembled at London did not succeed in effecting a settlement of the "Eastern Question." The mutual jealousies of the different members of the Balkan League broke out, the demands of Bulgaria against Serbia being fomented by the Germanic powers, who, no doubt much to their satisfaction, watched a second Balkan War, which if it led to the humiliation of the protégé Bulgaria, on the other hand broke up the solidarity of the Balkan League and was concluded by the Peace of Bukharest, made under Germanic influence, whereby Adrianople was left in the hands of the Turks and Serbia excluded from the Adriatic.

Ferdinand, traitor to the Slavic cause in the Peninsula,

craftily aimed at utilising Austrian aid for his own future aggrandizement at the expense of his neighbours. To the patriotic Slavs Russia appeared the protector, Austria the sinister enemy of all the legitimate aspirations of the Balkan peoples. On June 28th, 1914, two Bosnian Serbs murdered the Archduke Francis Ferdinand in Serajevo. There had been foul assassinations by Serbs before—in 1903 particularly. Indignation stirred by the crime was strong not only in Austria. There it was as vehement as it was sincere. Austria was keen for punishment in any case. But there were those who saw in the murder of the Archduke no affair of merely local importance, but a superb opportunity. If the “great day” was to come—and it had been decreed by a Kaiser, a Junkerdom, a people intent on world domination that it must—when could it come more opportunely? The enlargement of the Kiel Canal had just been made; Russia was threatened by a paralysing railway strike; France had financial and other political troubles; the Caillaux affair appeared to point to a certain rottenness; Great Britain was rotten, too, in the midst of her Irish, “wild women” and labour problems, all evidence to the German mind of the degeneracy of an effete empire. Moreover, prospects were unlikely to improve in the future. There were possibilities of increase in size and efficiency in both the French and Russian armies, of railway development in Russia which might make the war on two fronts awkward. The conspirators were therefore determined on a rupture; and all the splendid efforts of Sir Edward Grey to avoid the threatened catastrophe were foredoomed to failure. Those efforts, both in connection with the original cause of trouble, the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia, and afterwards in connection with the question of Belgian neutrality,

were a lasting honour to the statesman who for eight years had striven consistently to preserve the peace of Europe.

Yet the whole policy of Viscount Grey has inevitably come in for much criticism. It is urged with much apparent force that the sinister designs of Germany being so manifest, a policy of conciliation was useless, that the government should have made up its mind that war was inevitable, taken the nation into its confidence and made large military as well as naval preparation for the outbreak of hostilities. Or, short of that, that the government should have taken throughout a more strident tone and used threats instead of persuasion. It is easy to be wise after the event, and probably no responsible ministry, of whatever party, would have adopted such an attitude as that suggested. One is not justified in taking the view that a possible disaster is inevitable unless the proof is overwhelming. Seldom, indeed, are the courses of human affairs to be regarded as unavoidable. There were forces in Germany antagonistic to Junkerdom, and if their strength was exaggerated, they were by no means negligible. To act on the assumption of an inevitable war and strain the whole national nerve for it, instead of endeavouring by all human means to avoid it, would have been to play the same sort of part as Germany. People who really believe in peace and goodwill among men and nations do not act in that way. If they believe in conciliation they do not deal in menaces. On the other hand, it is absurd to suggest, especially after Agadir, that Great Britain did not make it quite clear that she was prepared to fight if necessary. If Germany did not believe she meant it that certainly was not because the language was insufficiently plain—nothing could have been plainer—but because Germany suffered from a *idée fixe* about

British impotence. Before the love of peace was placed the honour of a great people. Yet always war was regarded as a hateful thing, the last resource of civilisation in international disputes ; and through the succeeding centuries of her history, the proof provided by the ten anxious years before the War of the genuineness of the nation's detestation of war and love of peace will go down as one of the finest possessions of its history. For it is in such things that there lie the true greatness and the lasting reputation of a people.

## CHAPTER IV

### STEAM-POWER AND MACHINERY IN INDUSTRY

THERE has been no other period in the history of Great Britain which, from the standpoint of economic expansion, can compare with the era which began with the great mechanical inventions of the latter half of the eighteenth century. Those inventions, themselves tokens of a great development already accomplished, inaugurated a period of change of methods of industrial production and of increase in the scale on which it was presented, which have changed the face of the country and profoundly modified the whole of the side of social organisation which is associated with that prime demand on human activity, the provision for the material needs and comfort of the people. These changes, while revolutionary in their scope, have been so complex in their effects that historians hesitate to collect them under one label, and their description as the "Industrial Revolution," although the most convenient still, can only be used with the understanding that it covers far more than those mechanical changes, those improvements in processes, which the name at first suggests. Yet those technical changes, the fruits of the effort and success of the past, and the instruments of the expansion of the following century, are the most clearly defined features in the whole story, the very core of the whole growth. Those changes are concerned with machinery, and essentially with power-driven machinery,

with machinery collected under one roof to draw its power ; from one steam-engine, in short, with the introduction of the factory. The nineteenth century is the era of power ; at first water-power, but, in the main, steam-power, in industry.

For the extensive use of high-speed machinery, and of the steam-engine, there are two initial requisites ; first, iron and steel as the materials which alone will meet the needs of the engineer in regard to strength, design, and resistance to fire and heat ; and, second, fuel as the source of energy from which the power of the steam-engine is derived. The first stages in the Industrial Revolution on the technical side are, therefore, the improvements in the smelting of iron and the mining of coal. These two industries of iron-smelting and coal-mining are inextricably involved the one with the other, for the remedy for the decline of the English iron production which was so strongly evident at the opening of the eighteenth century was found in the discovery of means to use coal as the smelting fuel. In 1720 the condition of English iron-smelting was such that there was an average annual output of only 17,000 tons of pig-iron for the whole country ; the industry was widely distributed, but the eastern part of Sussex, and the Forest of Dean, which had been the most flourishing centres, and which still maintained the first places, could not boast a dozen blast furnaces each. The iron manufactures of the country, consisting mainly of the widespread manufacture of domestic cooking utensils and horse-shoes, the local industries of Sheffield cutlery and Birmingham hardware, and the special business of instruments of war, found the produce of the English blast furnaces insufficient for their needs. Until such improvements could be made as would meet the great new

demands of the engineering trades for iron and steel, the Industrial Revolution could never take place. The cause of the depressed state of smelting was not any lack of ore, but the absence of proper fuel for the furnaces. The sulphurous impurities of coal contaminated the molten metal and produced pig-iron which was so brittle as to be useless under the hammer. For this reason smelting was carried on entirely with charcoal fuel, which was devoured in enormous quantities by the furnaces. The depletion of the forests by the smelting work itself, the clearing of forests in the interests of farming, and the restrictions placed on the use of timber under a public opinion alarmed at the prospect of a lack of material for naval construction, had produced a crisis. Coal there was in abundance, and not too difficult to obtain, for the coalfields of Northumberland were already providing the towns, especially London, with domestic fuel, while sundry industrial enterprises, such as forges and soap-boiling works, used coal habitually. More than one iron-master turned his attention to the problem of the use of coal for smelting, but the first solution was not reached till 1735, when Abraham Darby produced coke, and with it successfully smelted iron; his solution was to remove the impurities from the coal before putting it into the furnace. A more thorough solution, by which coal could be used without previous treatment, was the "reverberatory furnace" invented by the Cranages in 1766. Five years before that Smeaton had furnished the Carron Iron Works with an improved blast, raised by water-power, and in 1790 steam-power was introduced for the purpose.

While the problem of smelting was being thus successfully dealt with, other processes were also being improved. Henry Cort, by 1784, had produced a process of

"puddling" and a system of rolling instead of hammering, which together constituted an improved means of making malleable iron bars from "pigs" of cast-iron, and Cort's rollers were rivalled by Watt's contemporary invention of the steam-hammer. Steel was produced on a small scale by 1750.

The eighteenth century which opened for England with a failing iron production, saw at its close all those methods beginning by which it was to be made capable of meeting the demands not only of industrial engineering, but of railways, steamships, modern buildings, and all those works of civil engineering which have followed since the first iron bridge was constructed across the Severn in 1779. The languishing industries of Sussex and the Forest of Dean were to give place to the thriving iron-smelting districts which have grown up wherever coal and iron-ore can conveniently be brought together. The means now existed for the making of steam-engines, and the early efforts of Savery and Newcomen at the beginning of the eighteenth century, directed towards the pumping out of deep coal workings, were consummated before its end by the steam-engine of Boulton and Watt (1782).

While these changes were taking place in the coal and iron industries, a series of inventions no less important was altering the methods of textile manufacture. Down to the middle of the eighteenth century spinning was still done by the spinning wheel, and weaving by the hand-loom, as spinning and weaving had been done for long generations, the only important change being the addition of the flying shuttle to looms. In the exotic silk industry alone there was a certain amount of machine spinning, and even some factories worked by water-power. The new

era opened in 1765 when Hargreaves invented his spinning jenny, by which many threads could be spun simultaneously. Three years later Arkwright claimed the invention of a device of cylinders for spinning, known as the water-frame; his claim to originality in the matter has been seriously disputed, but, at any rate, it was he who first made it a business success. Unlike the hand-operated jenny, the water-frame was power-driven by water. More significant still was Compton's "mule," combining the principles of Hargreave's and Arkwright's machines, invented in 1779 and first driven by water-power in 1790. These inventions were first used for cotton, and their success, especially that of the "mule," was such that not only was the rate of production so increased that the shortage of yarn formerly complained of by the cotton weavers was converted into a surplus, but the strength and fineness of the thread were so improved that the support of a linen warp was dispensed with, and pure cotton cloth was for the first time made in England, and made moreover of a fineness which enabled it to break into the monopoly of the East Indies. The fact that the production of cotton yarn had outstripped the capacity of the weavers to use it came to the notice of Cartwright, a village clergyman of no technical knowledge but considerable resourcefulness, who produced a loom to be driven by power between 1785 and 1787. The invention by Bell in 1783 of a cylinder for printing designs on calico supplanted the tedious method of printing by hand from wooden blocks, and in 1792 Cartwright perfected a machine for combing raw wool. The foundations of machine industry in textile manufacture were now laid, and it only remained to apply the contemporary improvements in engineering methods in order that from this

union might spring the factory system of rapid and large scale production which is the industrial characteristic of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This union of machinery and steam-power began with a steam cotton mill at Papplewick, near Nottingham, in 1785, which was soon followed by similar enterprises in Manchester, Glasgow, and elsewhere.

That the whole of this series of brilliant inventions is embraced within the space of a century (the majority of them indeed occurred within the forty years between 1750 and 1790) is no matter of coincidence, no mere freak of chance. They took place when they did because then, for the first time, conditions were mature for them. Earlier efforts had indeed been made, but they had failed because they were premature. Machine industry involves heavy outlay on machinery and buildings, and it can only be carried on profitably through production in large quantities. A machine does the work of many men ; a large part of its capacity is wasted, and its cost is not justified, if it is required to do no more work than could be done by a few men : a steam-engine can drive many machines ; a large part of its capacity is wasted, and its cost is not justified, if it is required to drive only one or two machines. Here, then, are the necessary conditions for the introduction of machine methods and steam-power : abundant capital, readily available for construction, on the one hand ; and, on the other, world-wide trading connections, capable of supplying large quantities of raw materials and disposing of large quantities of manufactured goods. It was the work of the two preceding centuries that had at length secured these conditions and made the beginning of the Industrial Revolution possible in the eighteenth, so that "it was in England, in the last third

of the eighteenth century that *la grande industrie moderne* was born."

From mediæval times the backbone of English industry had been the making of woollen cloth. The energetic statesmanship of the Elizabethan period had introduced other new manufactures of no small importance, but the older cloth manufacture was always the chief. This soon became more than a source of clothing for the home population, and expanded into the basis of a prosperous foreign trade. The earlier trading companies, whose exploits give glamour to the pages of Hakluyt, and whose enterprise ousted the German Hansa from English foreign trade, opened up new markets abroad, particularly for English cloth, and brought back gold or furs, or other useful commodities. True, the greatest of all the trading companies, the East India Company, trading with hot countries, had no use for English woollens, and was severely criticised because it exported bullion with which to make its purchase of Eastern luxuries for use in England. Nevertheless, it was performing, with the other trading companies, the important work of opening up foreign markets and establishing trade connections which were to prove invaluable to the expanding and varied British industries of the nineteenth century.

When by processes of manufacture man changes the form of commodities, or by commerce moves goods from where they are reproduced to where they can be used, he adds to their value. His labour and organising abilities are being used, probably in conjunction with tools and materials, to add to the value of goods, and thereby to add to his own wealth. Such of these improved goods as he requires for his own use or consumption he will keep, and the resulting increase in his personal wealth is obvious.

In manufacture, he will exchange such products as he does not require personally (and these will be by far the greater part) for things he does require, and by reason of the enhanced value of what he gives, he will receive more than he could have obtained in exchange for his unimproved goods; in commerce he will obtain goods to the extent of the increased usefulness he has given to the articles of commerce by putting them where they are wanted. Yet only in the most primitive and restricted of conditions can the exchange of commodities be regarded as taking place direct. The difficulties would be far too great for such a system of barter to persist in a developing community. The processes of production could not develop if the producer knew there lay before him the double difficulty of finding men who not merely wanted his produce, but who had just what he wanted himself to give in return, and had it in quantities and qualities reasonably comparable in value to the goods of which he wished to dispose. The solution to the difficulty has been readily found by all civilizations, ancient and modern, in the selection of a suitable commodity as a medium of exchange, which all men will accept as an equivalent for their goods. If the medium of exchange is to be perfect in its operation, it must be possible to measure or to weigh off or to count out any desired quantity, so that goods may be given or taken for their exact equivalent, and it must be lasting so that the receiver of the medium may delay exchanging it for goods if he so desires. These conditions are well met by the precious metals, but whatever the nature of such a medium of exchange may be, it is entitled to the name of "money." Money divides the process by which a man exchanges what he makes or acquires for what he wants into the two processes of

selling and buying, and it enables him to postpone his right to buy indefinitely and gives him freedom to buy what he will, when he will, to the extent of the value of the money he holds. It enables him to reserve, to save, purchasing power. Such purchasing power as he saves<sup>1</sup> he may either use or lend to others to use, and since borrowers would use his purchasing power to their own material advantage, he is justified in asking for more of it in return than he lends. In ordinary language, under a monetary system, a man can save money till he chooses to spend it, or, if he prefers, he can lend it out at interest. Now, the industries of this country and the foreign trade of the companies, and of private venturers also, made possible the amassing of large savings, but the application of these savings to industry was not yet as easy as might be. Some of the saving was done by industrial men, some by commercial, and even among the industrial men it did not follow that they were all anxious and ready to involve their establishments in experiments. Some means was needed to bring the classes holding savings, or "capital," into touch with the classes anxious and able to use it, and to arrange loans. There was required, as it were, a body of merchants dealing in money, that is to say, of bankers. "A million in the hands of a single banker," says Bagehot, "is a great power; he can at once lend it where he will, and borrowers can come to him because they know, or believe, that he has it. But the same sum scattered in tens and fifties through a whole nation is no power at all: no one knows where to find it, or whom to ask for it." This need was gradually met as the practice of hoarding gave place to that of deposit with the goldsmiths, who began some sort of

<sup>1</sup> In cash, or more probably in credit.

banking business, and finally the great landmark was reached, in 1694, of the establishment of the Bank of England.

These then were, broadly speaking, the reasons why the Industrial Revolution began towards the end of the eighteenth century: because British industrial and commercial enterprise had accumulated enough surplus capital to make possible the heavy outlay on buildings and machinery which modern industrial methods require; because the development of a good banking system made that capital available for industrial improvement; and because commercial enterprise had also opened up the whole of the then known world as a source of supply of raw materials, and of demand for finished goods in those large quantities which must be involved in large scale manufacture.

The application of machinery and power changed the face of England. The spinning and weaving of wool, the staple industry of the country for centuries, had been carried on in the cottage of the small farmer and the farm labourer, whose livelihood was gained partly from agriculture, and partly from the manufacture of cloth by spinning-wheel and hand-loom. As the organization of the market afforded sufficient opportunities, the clothier, who bought the cloth from the cottagers of the neighbourhood and sold or exported it, increased in importance. In many cases he supplied raw material and paid wages, and occasionally, for convenience of supervision, he would collect his workers in one building, but there was no technical need in the method of manufacture requiring the collection of looms and workers under one roof. Here was the beginning of the distinction between employer and wage-earner, and here was the germ of the factory, but

it was only the introduction of power and machinery which made these systems a necessity. Defoe's description of a district which had advanced as far as any in this direction by 1724 is well known : " The land was divided into small enclosures from two acres to six or seven each, seldom more, every three or four pieces of land having a house belonging to them ; hardly a home standing out of speaking distance from another. We could see at every house a ' tenter ' " (a frame for stretching the newly-woven cloth), " and on almost every tenter a piece of cloth. . . . At every considerable house there was a manufactory. Every clothier keeps one horse at least to carry his manufactures to the market, and every one generally keeps a cow or two for his family. By this means the small pieces of enclosed land about each house are occupied, for they scarce sow corn enough to keep their poultry." Even here the organization is essentially rural, but application of power to industry involved concentration in restricted areas where first water-power, and, later, coal for steam-power was to be found. Among the textiles, cotton experienced a revolution before wool, because the larger quantities of raw cotton required for machine and power manufacture were obtainable from the East, whereas even the old system in the woollen trade had outgrown the supplies to such an extent that there was already a serious shortage of employment. The revolution in the manufacture of cloth was only completed in the first third of the nineteenth century, by which time experiments in the rearing of sheep of good fleece in Australia had succeeded. The cotton industry, already localised in Lancashire, found it unnecessary to move in order to find power, but the woollen industry, in introducing power, deserted such important centres as East

Anglia and, in part, Somerset and Wiltshire, for the North where first the mountain streams and later the coalfields were used. There grew up areas where the town and the factory chimney were the characteristic features, such as the textile areas of Lancashire and Yorkshire and south-west Scotland, the greatly expanded iron area round Birmingham, together with the Black Country, and the new mining district of South Wales. The development of industry was on such a scale as ultimately to demand more labour than before. This was supplied by extensive migration to the towns, on the one hand because of the demand for labour there, on the other because the movement for enclosing the country into large farms was rendering the position of the small independent farmer untenable, and later because the competition of imported foodstuffs reduced English agriculture to a very low position among our national enterprises. There thus appeared a teeming town population, and although the agricultural regions were depleted, the population of England and Wales, as a whole, increased from six and a half to nine millions between 1750 and 1801, and from nine to sixteen millions by 1841, an increase which has since continued with only slightly abated rapidity, until at the 1911 census the figure stood at thirty-six millions.<sup>1</sup> The increase between 1700 and 1750 is estimated to have been only from five and a half millions to six and a half.

The towns were ill-prepared to meet the hugely increased demands on their accommodation caused by the immigration of so many workers from the country, and maintained by a rate of increase in the population unknown before. Old houses were overcrowded; new ones were

<sup>1</sup> Population of United Kingdom, 1911 : 45·4 millions.

built without regard for sanitation, and they were soon overcrowded too. The towns of the Industrial Revolution brought with them the great modern problem of the public health, and at first nothing was done to meet that problem. A series of epidemics, culminating in the outbreak of cholera which began in 1831, forced the problem into prominence, and tardy action at last produced a board of health in 1848. From that time progress has been made which has placed English sanitary administration on a very high level ; yet there is still work to be done, of which the recent agitation for clearing slum areas as part of the *post-bellum* housing policy is sufficient evidence.

For the growing army of workers there was another concentration in addition to concentration in towns ; the conditions of machine industry brought the employees together in large numbers in factories. Where the steam-engine is, there must the machines be ; and where the machines are, there the workers must be assembled. Domestic industry became impossible when power-driven machinery was introduced. One of the first results of this change was to draw attention to evils, evident in the mass, but almost unnoticed while scattered widely over the country. Such evils as the overworking and bad housing of children and the exploiting of very young children were not new, but under the factory system they presented themselves as things which could not long be neglected. Two or three unfortunate children in a cottage or a dozen or so in a converted country house might pass unnoticed, but crowds of children bearing the marks of overstrain and bad conditions were bound to attract attention as they streamed in and out of the great town factories. The factory system also generated its own new peculiar evils : cramped conditions, insufficient ventila-

tion, and an atmosphere often impregnated with dust and fluff, the artificially moistened atmosphere in cotton mills, the dangers of unguarded machinery, the new strain of unremitting attention to a machine driven by the never-tiring power of steam, all called for attention.

The re-organization which accompanied the growth of these problems was entirely new, and played a great part in determining the mode of their solution. The Industrial Revolution led to a complete cleavage into two groups of those engaged in industry. A wage-earning class appeared here and there at earlier dates, but after the Industrial Revolution it was no longer possible for the wage-earner to exist as an occasional variant to the domestic worker who was his own master. With the factory system the wage-earner became almost universal. To build and equip a factory required command of capital and powers of business organization seldom to be found in the individual working alone on his own account, and although there soon appeared an attempt, in the school of Robert Owen, to establish co-operation of workmen for these ends, they have seldom proved very successful. The factory system, therefore, crystallized the two classes which are popularly labelled "Capital" and "Labour"; the "Labour Problem," as it exists to-day, is a child of the Industrial Revolution. All arrangements for removing evils, whether old but brought to light by the factory system or new and produced by the factory system, as well as the question of rates of wages, became necessarily matters of bargaining between masters and men. In spite of theoretical demonstrations to the contrary, master and man soon proved to be on very unequal terms in the matter of bargaining. The master with his wider knowledge of industrial and market conditions, and

his power of deferring the engagement of a "hand," always had the advantage. Moreover, although in the long run the use of power and machinery has caused an expansion which has increased the demand for labour, yet there was at first a surplus of labour, because unskilled labour was good enough for tending many kinds of machines. Therefore any workman bargaining for better conditions would be passed over and another whose demands were smaller would be engaged. The only means of establishing more equal conditions of bargaining was concerted action on the part of the workers; but, although their association in factories was greatly in favour of their combining, this right was for long denied them. In the end a dual system was established whereby the interests of the men and questions concerning wages were left mainly to the workers acting in combination, while the state, in the interests of public health, legislated for conditions of work and in regard to the employment of women and children. So there grew up side by side the system of Factory Acts and the institution of Trade Unionism, two systems so important as to demand explanation in a separate chapter.

The growth of a large new population, so largely consisting of the employed class, has naturally given that class greater weight in the political affairs of the state, so that the Industrial Revolution has been an important influence in that series of democratic measures which began timidly with the first Reform Act, while the high organization of industrial groups for trade purposes tends to be more and more used to urge the social demands of the working classes. Trade Unionism has thus led on to the introduction into the political affairs of the state of a "labour party" which claims to stand for the political

well-being of the workers as the trade unions stand for their economic security.

Reference has already been made to the economic expansion which followed on the changes in industrial methods. The economy of large undertakings became more and more evident, allowing as it did for better internal organization, for better use of power, for cheaper buying of materials because on a larger scale, while it provided a strong position in the market for finished goods, and opportunities to push trade in new directions. Before long, establishments became so large that they could seldom be financed by one capitalist or even by a small group of partners. The position was greatly improved in this matter by the legalizing of limited liability companies in 1855. In such a company the financial risk undertaken by the shareholders is limited to the nominal value of the stock they hold. By issuing shares of small value (in practice often for as little as one pound each) money for an enterprise can be collected from a large number of people, each of whom is risking the loss of exactly the cost of the shares he holds and no more, and each of whom may relinquish his interest in the business by the simple process of selling his shares in the public stock market. The London Stock Exchange so late as 1802 was dealing almost entirely in the stocks and bonds of the various national governments, and the great development of joint stock was not to take place until it was accompanied by limited liability. The Act of 1855, and the growth of the money market into a delicate but efficient organism, together with the great multiplication of joint stock banks, complete the facilities for the application of capital to economic enterprises which became important when the Bank of England was established.

Industrial enterprises now frequently involve capital to the extent of many millions of pounds.

The great expansion in industry is reflected in the expansion in means of transportation and communication which have been its inevitable sequel. The great bulk of raw material and manufactured goods with which modern commerce has to deal could only be moved by modern means of transportation. The canal and the railway on land, and the steamship at sea, have grown up in the nineteenth century to meet the new demands of industry arising out of the inventions of the eighteenth, and of necessity the Industrial Revolution has been followed by a revolution in transport which also centred round the utilization of steam-power.

The Industrial Revolution has proved, therefore, one of the epoch-making events of the history of Great Britain, and ultimately of the world. It found her largely agricultural ; it has left her almost entirely industrial and commercial. It found her with a rural population ; it has left her with a people predominantly urban. It has given birth to problems of public health and to labour problems which are peculiar to a modern industrial state, and it has been a factor in the political changes of the last hundred years. It has made a profound impression on those financial and commercial systems to whose earlier successes it owes its very existence, and, finally, it has found its place in other countries, changing them and raising up powerful rivals in the field where Great Britain was the pioneer.

## CHAPTER V

### MODERN TRANSPORT AND THE EXPANSION OF COMMERCE

ON the heels of the Industrial Revolution there followed a change in methods of carriage by land and sea which was in two respects closely related to it. In the first place, the change in transportation, as in manufacture, marked the beginning of the reign of iron and steam ; secondly, the expansion of the machinery of transport was a necessary result of the growth of manufacture, for manufacture demands the movement inwards of raw material and outwards of industrial produce. Both revolutions were made possible by the developments in capital resources and monetary facilities which preceded them and continued in sympathy with them.

At the time when inventors were producing the contrivances which were to revolutionize industry, the only means of overland communication was by horse-waggons on roads. This was supplemented by a considerable coasting trade, which had as one of its most important branches the carriage by sea of coal from Newcastle to London. Heavy and bulky goods such as coal were ill-suited for road transport over long distances, even if the roads were good ; and although there appear to have been good roads in England in the eighteenth century, there were also many that were indifferent, and some really bad. It was not every coalfield that had the geographical

advantage of Newcastle, making available the alternative method of transport by sea. The Duke of Bridgewater's coal-mines at Worsley were experiencing growing difficulty in sending their produce to Manchester, a distance of seven miles traversed by pack-horses, so that the duke sought to devise other means of transport. In 1761 the first canal, the Bridgewater Canal, from Worsley to Manchester, was opened, and the produce of the Worsley coal-mines could henceforward be taken by water to Manchester, where the price of coal fell by half. Once the construction of canals had been shown to be practicable, their popularity increased and a regular canal mania set in, so that by the end of the century all the principal navigable rivers and all the chief towns of the country were linked by these artificial waterways.

The construction of canals was new to England at this time, but was by no means a new invention; canals had already been constructed in France, and had for centuries been common in the Low Countries. Bruges and Ghent had, indeed, been prosperous ports, reached from the sea by ship canals, in the Middle Ages. The great original contribution of Great Britain to the problem of overland transport was the railway and its locomotive. The canals were capable of carrying heavy and bulky cargoes, but they carried them slowly, so that they were particularly liable to suffer from congestion under any great pressure of business, and the growth of industry was making heavy demands on transport, especially in the matter of the supply of coal for generating steam-power. Brindley, the engineer of the Manchester and Worsley Canal, had followed up that achievement with a barge canal from Liverpool to Manchester by which goods could be moved between those cities in twenty hours, but

this time was exceeded more and more as time went on, until the end of the first quarter of last century found it hopelessly congested in spite of increased freights. As this example shows, the introduction of the railway was an absolute need for the continued expansion of industry. This came in 1823, when the Stockton and Darlington Railway was opened. Once more the new instrument was applied early to communication between Liverpool and Manchester, where the success of Stephenson's locomotive was demonstrated. The new means of transport more than fulfilled expectations. That it would be a means of moving large quantities of heavy goods had been anticipated, but the speed at which it would do so had not been even imagined. It became clear that the construction of a sufficient number of railways would solve the problem of the expeditious overland transport of large quantities of merchandise. A comparison between this early crude railway, the road and the overburdened canal tells how the freight by railway was two-thirds of that by road, and the time of the journey by the former only two hours as against twenty, plus delays, by canal.

Railways soon formed a network over the country, at first competing keenly with the canals, but soon overwhelming them. The lines were not mapped out as great systems extending through the length and breadth of the kingdom; many local lines were built, not on any concerted plan, but here and there as local needs and enterprise dictated. Then followed a period of railway amalgamations, by which the great trunk lines were evolved in the middle of the century. Since then the extension of the railway system has continued, so that there are now twenty-four thousand miles of railway route in the United Kingdom.

The latest feature of inland transport is the revival of road transport under the influence of mechanical traction. The invention of the internal combustion engine has so changed road communication that it can be a serious rival to railway transport both in speed and capacity. Motor transport needs good highways, however, and much expenditure and labour have been given to the problem of providing a satisfactory surface. The roads of this country are still under local control, but their growing importance under recent developments in transport has raised the question of the provision of national trunk roads.

The expansion of industry in Great Britain demanded the development of foreign countries, first, to provide increasing supplies of raw materials and to open up new markets for manufactured goods; and, second, to tap those foreign sources of food supply which became more and more necessary as the home country became less and less agricultural and assumed the essentially industrial character which gave her for a time the name of the "workshop of the world." The need arose, therefore, of making commercially accessible areas of great productive potentiality, but situated far from the coast, such as the "Middle West" of the United States, the plains of India, and the steppes of Russia. In India a network of railways has grown up covering the whole empire, and making the export of great quantities of wheat possible, as well as that of cotton and other commodities. In Russia not only were the corn-growing regions of the south joined by railway to the nearest port, Odessa, but the difficult forest country of middle Russia was pierced, and the way opened up to the Baltic ports of Prussia (Danzig, Stettin, etc.) and to the Russian ports of Riga and

Petrograd. In the United States the problem was different ; it was not one of obtaining easier access to an area already populated and to some extent developed, but of opening up an entirely new country inhabited only by wandering Indians, and consisting of league upon league of rolling prairie. In this work the railways played by far the most important part. The population had been distributed in conformity to natural features. The Alleghany Mountains, no serious obstacle to railway engineering, were sufficiently important to strangle traffic by road and waggon, so that the areas settled east of the Rockies were confined to the Atlantic coastal plain and to the valleys of the great rivers, which afforded good water-routes to the coast. The railways surmounted the mountain barrier. Their constructors controlled at first broad belts of land sufficient in extent not only to carry the track, but to be developed agriculturally, so as to provide enough merchandise to give the railway profitable business. Encouraged by the railways, population began to move west ; encouraged by steamships, emigration from Europe refilled the coastal states. The development of the west provided not only sustenance for a large population, but a source of supply for Europe of grain and meat, besides helping the industrial development of the States. The cases of Russia, India, and North America are admirable and important examples of the effects of railway enterprise, but they are after all only typical of what has happened all over the world. Africa, and South America too, have been developed by railways, and all the great European countries have, of course, become covered with a network of lines.

Yet all the development of overseas supplies by railways would have been useless, indeed impossible, but for

the concurrent development of ocean navigation to join the old countries to the new by efficient and sufficient commercial transport. Quite as important as the railway is the steamship. Here, as in steam industry, the application of iron and steel was an important feature. The iron sailing ship preceded the steamship. At the opening of the nineteenth century the maritime trade of the world was carried on in wooden sailing ships. These had attained to considerable size, the draught of the finest East Indiamen being 23 feet, but in other dimensions they were inferior to modern steel vessels of the same draught. The first sea-going iron ship was built in 1834, and the possibility of iron for big vessels was conclusively demonstrated by the *Great Eastern* in 1858. The use of iron instead of wood considerably increased the cargo capacity of vessels, because iron, by reason of its greater strength, can be used to construct a much thinner hull than is possible with wood, so that despite the greater specific gravity of the actual material, the quantity used is so much smaller that, size for size, the weight and displacement of an iron vessel proved to be only three-quarters that of a wooden one. Still greater economy in this direction was effected by the use of steel. The growing demand of overseas commerce on British shipping was met at first, therefore, by the invention of the iron ship.

The iron ship was, however, at first a sailing ship, suffering from all the disadvantages of propulsion by so unreliable a force as winds of variable strength and direction. It was impossible to predict with any accuracy the length of a sailing voyage, and any idea of running to time-table was out of the question. The merchant could not rely on getting his goods from overseas by a given

date, the shipper waiting to send a return cargo would be unable even to guarantee the date on which his consignment would be despatched. Indeed, there was often no return voyage, for on the longer routes the vessels made one voyage, confined as far as possible to the summer months, and then were laid up for the winter. The arrivals at London from the West Indies at the end of the eighteenth century are a remarkable illustration of the irregularity, even within seasonal limits, of ocean voyages. In the year 1790 there were in all 241 arrivals from West Indian ports, of which 199, or over four-fifths, took place in the four months from June to September ; September accounted for 85 out of this 199, and of the 85, there arrived 48 in the space of two days. Records exist for several years, and 1790 is typical.

It was only by the increased capacity, regularity, and speed afforded by the steamship that the demands of a foreign trade expanding more and more rapidly could ultimately be met. In the iron ship, proof against fire, and capable of withstanding the vibration of heavy machinery, the general use of steam-power was possible. Successful experiments in this direction began with the century ; in 1802 a steam-tug was at work on the Clyde, where by 1812 the first passenger steamer was plying. Experiment continued both in England and America ; in 1815 the first British coasting voyage was made from London to Glasgow, and in the following year the Channel was crossed from Brighton to Le Havre. For ocean voyages the difficulty of carrying sufficient fuel was for long a serious obstacle, and the famous voyages of the *Savannah* across the Atlantic in 1819 and of the *Enterprise* between London and Calcutta in 1825 were performed partly under sail and partly under steam. At last

economies were effected in fuel by improvements in the marine engine, and this difficulty was overcome.

Regular steam services succeeded experimental voyages, the short crossings being the first to benefit. A mail service from Holyhead to Dublin was running in 1820, and in 1840 regular voyages from London to Alexandria linked up with others from Suez to Bombay. Regular Atlantic crossings under steam began in 1838. These were at first passenger services, but the advantages of steam for the ocean transport of goods soon became obvious, and the triumph of the steamship was complete. In 1860 British shipping consisted of 447 steamships and 6876 sailing vessels. In 1913, the last year before the war, there were 12,602 steamers (11,273,000 tons net) and 8336 sailing vessels (846,000 tons).

In the introduction of the steamship, Great Britain's only serious rival, the United States, was crippled at the outset by the Civil War, so that we obtained a supremacy in revolutionized shipping parallel to our previous supremacy in revolutionized industry. This position we never altogether lost in peace-time, but the depletion of our mercantile marine during the War dealt it a serious blow.

With the development of shipping there has been a great increase in the size and elaboration of seaports. At the beginning of last century there were a number of basins of small importance, used principally for laying up ships between voyages, and there had been one or two spasmodic attempts at dock building. Liverpool alone had at that time a genuine dock system; the earliest dock there had been built between 1709 and 1716, and more docks had been added during the remainder of the eighteenth century. The expansion of industry and trade had

already, by 1800, developed sufficiently to demand more shipping and more accommodation for it. The demand at first was simply for more water area, more mooring space, and it was met within a very few years at London by the construction of the West India, London, and East India Docks, and at Bristol by the Floating Harbour, while dock building continued at Liverpool, and rather later was started at Hull. Only in the exceptionally shallow approaches of the Clyde was the question of depth then asserting itself, and extensive dredging taking place, but the appearance of the giant modern steamer, with its economies in management and carrying capacity, has made the problem of depth an acute one in recent times. While economy in working raises the large vessel in the shipowner's favour, there is an offset, the difficulty of obtaining sufficiently deep accommodation in the ports and docks, with the lesser problem of obtaining quay equipment adequate for unloading and loading so rapidly and efficiently that these large vessels, representing so much vested capital and employing so large a staff, shall not be kept idle a minute more than absolutely necessary. It is only the pressure of competition between ports, not only nationally, but internationally—the fear of one port that it may lose the trade of the big ships to another which will become an entrepôt, leaving to its beaten rivals only a coasting or ferry service with itself—that has kept the great ports up to the extremely high standard demanded by shipping. In one conspicuous case there was a failure, when London was losing trade and prestige under the control of the ruined dock companies, so that it has been necessary to reconstitute the administration of that port entirely.<sup>1</sup> The modern seaport has learned

<sup>1</sup> Under the Port of London Authority (1908).

to provide a deep and broad approach in the estuary, numerous deep and large docks, served where necessary by extensive entrance locks, and in all cases by elaborate cranes and warehouse facilities. To indicate the scale on which modern ports operate, it is only necessary to mention that 1914 saw in execution and contemplation schemes of improvement at London and Antwerp, then estimated in each case to cost fourteen million pounds. At the same time, the great staff of unskilled labourers which has grown up with the extension of ports has produced one of the most difficult of the labour problems of the last half-century.

Two other great engineering works have resulted from the expansion of shipping, to wit, the canals through the isthmuses of Suez and Panama. Apart from mediæval examples, long fallen into decay, there were no ship canals before steam days, for the handling of vessels under sail in a restricted passage was impossible and horse-towage difficult and slow for large craft. The ship canal of modern times is therefore an accompaniment of the use of mechanical propulsion for vessels. The Suez Canal offered a much shorter route to the East than the older (and still useful) route round the Cape of Good Hope.<sup>1</sup> The Panama has opened another route to the Antipodes shorter than the westward route by Cape Horn, but not materially shorter than the Suez route for European shipping; its principal importance lies in the great shortening of the passages between Atlantic and Pacific ports of North and South America. Any reference to ship canals must include the successful attempt to make

<sup>1</sup> Quite apart from ship canals, steam shipping shortened many sea routes because steamers could often sail the great circle, whereas the sailing vessels of commerce, unable to sail very "close" to winds not entirely favourable, were often obliged to take longer routes.

Manchester a port for ocean-going vessels by the construction of the Manchester Ship Canal, and the revival of the importance of Ghent by restoring to it canal connection with the Scheldt at Terneuzen on a scale sufficient to take modern vessels of moderate size.

The introduction of the electric telegraph in 1844 (improved of recent years by Marconi's invention of wireless telegraphy), the successful laying of submarine cables, crowned in 1866 by the achievement of the Atlantic cable, and the use of the telephone since 1876, are to be included among improvements in communications, since they give that rapidity to the transmission of messages and orders, which, with the rapid transport of goods, has gone so far to unify the markets and the supplies of the world.

The development of modern methods of transport by sea and by land has resulted in an unprecedented expansion of the trade of the world. Goods are exchanged between all parts of the globe, new sources and markets are accessible; industry has responded to the growing facilities by demanding and giving more merchandise. Our own foreign trade in 1800 was valued at about sixty million pounds sterling; by 1850 it had reached nearly three hundred million; by 1913 it had reached £1,403,555,065. This extraordinary rate of increase knew no serious check during the whole period. In fifty years the value of our foreign trade increased fivefold; in the next sixty-three years, it was able to increase nearly fivefold once more, almost a twenty-fivefold increase for the whole period.<sup>1</sup> The increase in the first

<sup>1</sup> The increase for the whole eighteenth century, if available statistics may be relied on, was less than fivefold, and most of it was accounted for late in the century, when modern industry was beginning.

half of the period is the direct result of the Industrial Revolution, but progress at that great pace was only to be continued with the help of revolutionary changes in transport. Industry and commerce must go together. Commercial success made machine industry possible, machine industry demanded an expansion in commerce, and the successful response of commerce, consisting in the revolution in methods of transport, made the continued expansion of industry possible. The inventions applied to industry and transport since 1750 have between them effected a change in scale which has altered the whole economic outlook of the world.

Among our imports, great and important lines of trade have been developed. Foremost of all in importance is the growth of our import of food supplies, as railways have opened up the corn-growing and cattle-ranching areas of the new countries, and our own people, ceasing to be agricultural, have demanded more and more to be fed by those for whose markets they were manufacturing. Our import of wheat and flour, small and irregular at the beginning of last century, grew to 118 million hundred-weights in 1913, besides re-exports. This great supply was drawn from all parts of the world, from the United States, Canada, India, and the Argentine, from Australia, and from the Black Sea, so that our plenty and security was said to lie in the multitude of sources, yielding at various times of the year, so that famine could never come near to us.

The invention of refrigeration has made possible the transport to Europe of meat from all parts of the world, especially from New Zealand and South America, so that in 1913 nine million cwts. of beef, and five million cwts. of mutton were imported. Fresh meat has become a

regular article of diet for the working classes of this country, entirely as a result of the revolution in methods of transport.

The raw materials of industry also constitute a large part of the imports of the United Kingdom. The revived iron industry was the precursor of modern machinery in both industry and transport, and to meet present-day requirements of engineering, civil and mechanical, as well as of the hardware manufacture, this industry has, too, so expanded that home supplies of ore have long ceased to be adequate. In 1913 there was added to the home production of sixteen million tons of iron ore an import of seven and a half million tons. In the textile trades, the import of wool is a feature of the last hundred years. Since the shortage in the home supplies was first supplemented by Australasian wool the cloth manufacture has undergone a revolution in its methods, and hand in hand with the expansion of the manufacture has gone the development of the import. In 1913, 800 million pounds of raw sheep's and lambs' wool came into this country ; more than half of it came from Australia and New Zealand, and 17 per cent. of the whole import came from South Africa. It therefore constitutes a very large new trade in a commodity from very distant sources, such as only modern shipping could manage. The still greater manufacture of cotton goods was always dependent on raw material from abroad, but where formerly it came almost entirely from the East and West Indies and amounted to only a quarter of a million hundredweights in 1790, it is now received mainly from North America and Egypt, which in 1913 supplied 73 per cent. and 18 per cent. respectively of a total import of nearly twenty million hundredweights of raw cotton.

The exports of the United Kingdom consist very largely of the produce of home industries. They are of all kinds and go to all parts of the world, and are not easy to classify. Woollen and cotton cloths are high on the list, but equally characteristic exports are those products of the iron and steel trades which are sent to other countries as instruments for their development on modern lines. In all states with any pretensions to manufacture, the Industrial Revolution is now far out of its infancy, but nevertheless our exports of machinery, and still more of railway materials, which go so often to countries undeveloped industrially, are still very large.

One other vital commodity for export must be mentioned, namely, coal. Modern shipping is expensive to work and to maintain; it would not yield a profit except from exceedingly high freights, unless it were well occupied, and therefore it is of the greatest advantage to an importing state if it can always provide a return cargo. Accordingly it is usual for vessels arriving at a British port and lacking any other return cargo, to take coal, for which there is always a market. The amount of coke, coal and patent fuel exported from the United Kingdom in 1913 approximated to seventy-seven million tons, excluding bunker coal.

When a country possesses well-organized ocean commerce on the longer sea routes, it often happens that goods will be collected to that country which are not ultimately to be consumed there. The merchandise is brought in great ocean-going vessels from its distant source, and it does not pay to send these ships to ports other than their final destination, for the purpose of discharging small parcels of cargo, especially when these ports lie off the main route. It is better that the whole

cargo should be discharged at one or two home ports, and the foreign consignments distributed by small vessels engaged in short sea-voyages. England, particularly at London, had obtained a large transhipment or "entrepôt" trade of this description before the revolution in methods of transport, and to a considerable extent she has retained this, although the opening of the Suez Canal has turned half of the voyage from the Far East into a coasting trip round Europe, and has revived such Mediterranean ports as Marseilles and Genoa, partly at the expense of the old entrepôts. The large predominance of British shipping, and the difficulty of moving a market from the place to which the goods have been in the habit of coming, have been two countervailing influences, but even they are in danger of being outweighed by the growth of foreign shipping and the development of magnificently equipped Continental ports. Our re-export trade in 1913 was still worth nearly 110 million pounds, or a seventh of the total imports.

The foregoing account of the oversea trade which modern shipping carries on for the United Kingdom is far from complete. It is sufficient to indicate the effects of modern transport, coupled with those of modern industrial methods, in expanding existing trades, in developing trade in new commodities, or in commodities formerly of little importance, in adding to the variety of the merchandise of the world, in securing the food of a growing population of industrial habits, and, lastly, in influencing the routes along which goods travel from the source of their production to their market.

To direct the huge work of modern transport entirely new agencies have been evolved. Railway companies are obviously no older than railways, although they are in

some sense the successors of the old carriers. The controllers of ocean transport are equally new. A hundred years ago there were no shipping firms. The larger trading establishments and chartered companies carried on their own trade in their own vessels. They were essentially merchants, owning their own ships in much the same way as they might own their own waggons. It is true that these vessels carried small amounts of merchandise for merchants other than their owners, but this was of little concern to the latter, who usually left the whole business in the hands of the captain. With the expansion and the elaboration of trade and the growing cost of ships this system changed. It is indeed a wealthy and prosperous firm that can afford to use a fleet of modern vessels of its own construction, and the work of a captain of a modern vessel leaves him no room for expert interest in the character of the cargo. It was inevitable that carriage by sea should become a separate enterprise, and a series of great shipping companies grew up in the nineteenth century, of which the earliest important examples were the Cunard and the Peninsular and Oriental lines. Under separate control, the business of shipping has been carefully organized. Advantage has been taken of the regularity of steamships to run them to time-tables exact almost to a day. Dates of arrivals and departures can be predicted with a great degree of accuracy, and by that arrangement between shipping companies known as the "conference," the sailings of the vessels of various lines serving the same routes are planned so as to give the best distribution both for the shipowner and the shipper; two important vessels do not often sail on one day on the same voyage, merely because they are of different lines, if one would do.

The transport trade of the world is now enormous, the machinery is effective, the ownership and control of that machinery is well organized ; the coping stone is placed on the whole system of modern communications by the improved control of the movements of commodities in the hands of the merchants which is given by the telegraph. " Spaces have been annihilated by the use of electricity, and their inconveniences mitigated by that of steam." The merchants, placed by the telegraph in immediate possession of facts as to supply, demand, quality, and price in regard to goods in all parts of the world, are able to arrange movements of goods with an exact forecast of the times at which they will be delivered by the reliable and regular agencies of railway and steamship. Equipped with these tools they have been able to fashion the markets of the world to resemble almost as closely the theoretically perfect market of the economist as does the money market itself. This is notably true of the cotton market, and little less true of those in corn, raw wool, and rubber ; so much so that all of these have earned the description of " speculative markets." This scope for supplying demands, for introducing new goods and fostering a demand for them, and generally for making the most profitable and effective distribution of the marketable produce of the world, is one which opens up unlimited fields for economic development. The improvements in transportation and communications have drawn the whole world together into close economic relationship, but it must not be forgotten that one of the effects of this is to make possible the keenest competition. Great Britain is no longer the " workshop of the world." Other countries, following her example when they arrived at the proper stage of development, profiting by her experience, and

using the facilities she had put at the disposal of the world, have passed rapidly through their own industrial revolutions. Their industrial organization is now as perfect as ours ; in some cases, and in some respects, they have natural resources finer than ours, and they are at least our equals in the field of industry. This is especially true of the United States, France, and Germany. All these competing states are brought into the closest contact by modern means of communication, and an element of rivalry expressed in business competition, and often in state interference by tariff and subsidy, became a feature of the nineteenth century, and ended in jealousies which at the last lay among the most deep-seated causes of the great upheaval of 1914.

As in industry, there has been a great development of capitalistic organization accompanying the changes in methods of transport. To build such vast engineering works as railroads and to equip them with rolling stock and buildings, requires the amassing of great capital resources, and the shipping companies have likewise to meet very heavy capital expenditure for shipbuilding, although in their case there is no track to provide. The paid-up capital of British railway companies in 1913 was £1,334,000,000, and the value of British shipping before the war was estimated at nearly £165,000,000 pounds. The two together are roughly equal to the most generally accepted estimates of the capital value of British industries.

The work of developing industry and commerce, even so far as natives are concerned, is not confined entirely to Great Britain. The capital as well as the experience of this country has served to aid development abroad, and this is most conspicuously true of railway transport.

The opening up of overseas sources and markets by railways has been very largely effected by British capital and British material. This in its turn has reacted on commerce, since the interest on this capital has been paid in goods. There has been some reduction in the amount of British capital invested abroad during the war, since large sums have been withdrawn (by the sale of foreign shares) for meeting war expenses. The foreign investments of British capital are still equal to the investments in British industry and British transport together.

Transportation, like industry, has attracted very great quantities of wage-earning labour, so that the problem of Capital and Labour is as clearly defined in transport as in industry. As in industry, the solution, partial only at present, has been sought in state interference in regard to conditions, coupled with trade union action in the matter of hours and wages. It is, however, chiefly in the field of railway transport that most has been heard of the proposal for complete national control. Among all such proposals, made as they are in regard to mines, agricultural land, even in regard to capital as a whole, none is more familiar, and none more possible of execution than the suggestion for the nationalization of railways. In many countries this is an accomplished fact ; in this country state control at least of railway working has been a necessity of the war. The reasons for the tendency lie primarily in unavoidable state interference at the outset, by which alone the railway can compel the sale to it of the very land on which its track is to be laid ; without such powers of compulsion, the enterprise would be at the mercy of the large landowners who, by refusal to allow the passage of the line through their estates, could cause endless diversions of routes or even prevent construction

altogether. Furthermore, these enterprises, started with the help of the state, are at once armed with the weapon of partial or complete monopoly. Between big centres there is usually a choice of railway routes, and in some cases the choice between railway routes and a sea route, but intermediate places have often no wide choice, and are dependent on one or two routes for the vital service of transport. This difficulty is intensified by the working agreements and amalgamations which have become so common between lines that were formerly rivals. In the United States the railway companies have been placed under restrictions so severe that breach may bring the directors into the criminal courts, and even in this country, where also the principle of private ownership has been allowed in railway enterprise, a firm hand has been kept on railway methods, and the Railway and Canal Commissioners sit regularly to decide questions of undue preference in rates, or other unfair means by which the power of the railway can be used to coerce industry, agriculture, or commerce.

The stories of the Industrial Revolution and the revolution in methods of transport go far to explain many problems of the present day, problems which are not merely related to the organization of manufacture and of carriage by land and sea. They have enlarged the scale of production enormously, as well as altered the technique. They have been responsible for the clear distinction which now exists between capital and labour. On the side of capitalization, the characteristic feature is the growth in the size of enterprises, a feature becoming more marked as the tendency increases for similar undertakings—banks, railways, steamship lines, petroleum workings, and what not—to amalgamate into

still more colossal firms. On the side of labour, the increase in the wage-earning population has made the working classes a power in the state, both industrially and politically. In international economic affairs the improvements in communications and the importance of marketing on behalf of industry have led to high organization of trade, and have given a growing importance to commercial foreign policy. Yet all these problems are consequences of the great expansion due to the mechanical inventions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, without which modern conditions could never have been obtained. The real roots of the matter lie in the past, in the commercial enterprise of Tudor and Stuart England, and in the workshops of Darby and Cort, of Arkwright and Cartwright, of Boulton and Watt, and George Stephenson.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE DECLINE AND REVIVAL OF BRITISH FARMING

GREAT Britain, until the beginning of last century was self-sufficing so far as corn and meat, the staple products of farming, were concerned. Of these two, corn was by far the more important, for meat was then a luxury, whereas now the supplies of frozen and chilled meat have rendered it an article of general consumption for all classes. In the eighteenth century English agriculture was advancing under the influence of scientific methods, of which the chief was the cultivation of root crops in rotation with grain crops; and in furtherance of this improvement "enclosing," or the buying up of small farms to make big ones, was taking place extensively; the new farming involved more capital and required more organization than earlier methods, and was best carried out on large farms. England seldom imported grain then, but sometimes grew a surplus for export. The policy of the Tudors in regard to the corn trade had accepted the hypothesis that there might be a surplus available, and the regulations of that time were directed to restrain over-exportation by which the supplies for the home consumer might suffer, but allowing the sale abroad of any real surplus; the question of corn import was non-existent, and continued to be of minor importance for centuries. Only under the occasional

stress of the failure of the home crops did import become imperative, and from the Restoration onwards there were heavy tariffs to secure that this was not exceeded. The change came with the Industrial Revolution. The population of the country was becoming in increasing proportion an urban population, and urban populations depend entirely on others for their food supply. Labour was leaving the land for the factory. Had not a rapidly increasing importation of corn been possible, the very question of food must have checked the expansion of industry ; yet at the beginning of the last century there was no obvious possibility of obtaining a large supply of foreign grain. Such as could be had was secured, so that it is to that period that the beginning of our corn import can be traced. Returns from the very beginning of the century show occasional imports, and by 1838 this feature of foreign trade was becoming continuous, but greatly fluctuating in amount, and it was not until 1860 that an import steadily increasing in quantity was shown in the trade returns. The following figures, representing hundredweights of wheat (including flour expressed in terms of wheat) illustrate this : in 1838 the import was 5,951,000 hundredweights, and in 1839 it was 12,470,000 hundredweights ; by 1843 it was below 5,000,000 hundredweights, and it remained small until 1846, for which year the import was 10,196,000 hundredweights ; by 1860 a figure of 31,842,000 hundredweights was reached. In 1870 there were only 30,901,000 hundredweights ; after which the statistics show a steady and rapid rise, so that for 1900 the import was 68,669,000 hundredweights, and in 1913<sup>1</sup> the large figure of 105,878,000 hundredweights

<sup>1</sup> Figures after 1913 are of no use for historical comparison, as for this purpose they are vitiated by the war. Except for the special purpose of illustrating war conditions, later statistics are not used in this volume.

was reached. The early imports were chiefly from the Baltic coast, for corn was a commodity requiring a great deal of cargo space, which necessitated short sea-crossings from the ports of shipment to Great Britain, for reasons of economy.

In 1848 the Corn Laws were repealed, but it required more than the removal of artificial restrictions to secure a sufficient corn supply for industrial Britain. It was only when the railway had opened up producing countries old and new, and the steamship had made the transport of corn by sea a commercial possibility, whatever the length of the voyage, that the necessary imports could take place. The fulfilment of these conditions explains the expansion of the last fifty years. The sources of supply have been so multiplied in both the northern and southern hemispheres that it has been the fashion to proclaim that Great Britain drew on a new corn harvest nearly every month, and therefore, since the failure of no one harvest could seriously affect the supplies, that our position in regard to this commodity must be perfectly secure. We were in the enjoyment of a plentiful and regular, and therefore cheap, corn supply, to which the development of cattle-ranches and sheep-runs in newer countries, aided by the device of refrigeration on the long sea-voyages, had added an equally plentiful supply of meat. That our own country districts were depopulated and home agriculture a failure seemed to matter little, and the country was content to go on manufacturing and transacting commercial and financial business on a world-wide scale, while the wide world fed us. The agricultural depression was seriously regarded by few besides the land-holders who were directly interested, those who saw strategic weakness in our dependence on foreign countries

for food supplies, and those who anticipated a deterioration in the physique of the nation if it continued to be so largely town-bred. Such fears awakened no general interest or alarm ; attempts to attract labour to the land by the offer of the independence and improved status associated with small holdings were little welcomed, while proposals to stem by the artificial device of a tariff the flood of foreign produce which overwhelmed the home farmer were actively and successfully met by the more immediately attractive policy of the "big loaf." The effects of the expansion of import trade caused growing depression during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, after which stagnation continued until well into the twentieth. The gross return from an acre of arable land in 1875 was 166s., but by 1895 it had sunk to 100s., although by the latter date there was much less land under the plough than twenty years earlier. During the decade before the War the returns measured in money were improving, but the improvement was mainly in sympathy with the rise in the general level of prices, and was more apparent than real. Between 1870 and 1914 the area under cultivation in England fell from about fourteen million acres to little more than ten million acres, and the number of agricultural labourers fell by twenty-five per cent. during the closing decade of last century. The character of British farming changed ; land formerly cultivated reverted to grass, and dairy-farming and poultry-farming occupied a larger and larger place.

Then came war, revealing the danger of the situation from the point of view of national defence. Rising freights and insurance, the shortage of available shipping, losses at sea, and all the hindrances to ocean commerce

attendant on naval warfare cut down the supplies of foreign and colonial food, and there came a period when the shortage of corn caused the gravest apprehension. As rapidly as possible more land was put under cultivation, and pasture was broken up by the plough for arable, but the reconversion was found to be neither easy nor rapid. The additional agricultural machinery and tools required were not easy to obtain when every available engineering works was being converted into a factory for munitions of war. The labour question was even more difficult. The labourers and their children who for years had been leaving the countryside had either emigrated or had become absorbed in the great towns, so that the problem of getting sufficient labour for an expanding agriculture would have been extremely hard even had there not been the prior call of the army on the services of so large a part of the adult male population. The solution was found in the extensive use of female labour, and in the retention of a proportion of the men on the land who were eligible for military service. Slowly the improvement was made, but only by the end of the War did the home produce become really satisfactory, and even in the middle of 1918 it was estimated that there were still two million acres of grass land which could be profitably converted. The effect of the crisis was to turn public attention to the need for fostering agriculture after the War. That England, with so large a population and so small an area, can ever be self-sufficing is manifestly impossible, but it should not be impossible to provide from home sources a proportion of the total amount consumed ; at least, large enough to give security against the recurrence of the peril which faced the country during the War. At the same time, the advantage to the health

of the community of a largely rural element reinforced the major argument.

The revival of farming requires the permanent removal of two distinct obstructions. First, that competition of foreign supplies which has crushed British agriculture must be prevented from recurring on an overwhelming scale when the ways of commerce are open again. Second, the scarcity of rural labour must be remedied.

Regarding the need for an agricultural revival as primarily a matter of national security, the question turns on the production of corn, especially of wheat. Nothing else is so important as bread ; nothing else, except perhaps milk, so indispensable. The experience of the War has shown that meat can be almost entirely forgone, but bread must be provided in moderate quantities at any rate. Even for cattle-farming the policy of relying mainly on pasture meets with severe expert criticism. "We must not suppose," says Sir A. D. Hall, "that the conversion of arable into grass land merely exchanged one form of production, corn, for another, meat and milk. The gross output of food from an acre of grass land is only about one-third of what it would be from the same land under the plough. For example, if the produce of one acre of arable land were fed to milch cows, it would enable them to yield between two and three times as much milk as the grass on the same land would. Though our beef cattle and milch cows have increased in numbers in the forty years prior to the War, one-half of that increase is offset by the reduction in the number of sheep, and the balance has been maintained not so much on the added grass as on the imported foods, maize, oil seeds, and the like, the trade in which has grown so greatly in that interval. The two million acres of corn land that have

gone have been practically pure loss to the state." Moreover, corn is grown invariably in rotation with root crops which provide fodder for cattle.

The main problem, therefore, is to keep as much land under the plough as possible, and this problem must be approached from the commercial side. In maintaining a large acreage of arable land, the British farmer is exposed to two grave risks. The first of these is the risk of the failure of the crop. Great Britain has a climate which is on the border-line for the cultivation of cereals. Were the latitude a little more northerly, it would be quite impossible to ripen corn at all. As it is, maize cannot be ripened anywhere in the kingdom, and not all parts of Scotland are suitable even for wheat. The one compensation is the length of our northern summer, which, provided it is a fine one, makes up for lack of intensity. There is, then, always the risk of great loss owing to excessive rain in late summer or early autumn. The second risk is that of loss in marketing, owing to the competition of imported supplies, which is certain to drive prices at least so low as to leave the home farmer the barest margin of profit. It is, indeed, estimated that the average return from an acre of arable land is only 18s. a year more than from an acre of pasture. When it is remembered that arable land requires extra capital in the shape of implements, manures, and seed, and also more labour and supervision, that allowance must be made for interest on capital, and for depreciation of plant, and that the wages of the agricultural labourer are rising, it becomes clear that the farmer cannot afford to face heavy risks in addition. The larger the amount of corn demanded from home sources the less margin in some cases will be left to meet risk, because it will become

more and more necessary to raise corn from land not altogether suited for corn production, and this land will require more expenditure on preparation. (In the case of hired land the farmer will probably be compensated for this by the payment of a lower rent for the poor land.) Whatever the acreage to be put and kept under the plough, the problem is essentially the same, namely, to provide a sufficient margin of profit to meet the heavy risks involved. This may be done in three ways: first, by forcing up the selling price, which could be effected by state purchase of the crops at a statutory rate, or by checking foreign competition by a tariff on import; second, by reducing expenses by a subsidy; third, by the state actually taking over some part of the risk. Control of prices is difficult and complicated; a tariff on import is open to the objection that it might curtail the total supply of foodstuffs by causing a failing off in imports, and also to the more general objection that the international good feeling which it is now the aim of all far-seeing statesmen to secure might be damaged by the setting up of tariffs; the payment of subsidies would require careful graduation, since some farmers work under greater difficulties of climate and soil than others. The simplest system appears to be one by which the state undertakes part of the risk, and promises to make good up to a certain figure any loss of profit which may fall on the farmer. This method has actually been adopted by the Corn Production Act of 1917.

This Act is of the nature of an experiment, and is only operative until 1922. By that time the permanent peace conditions of agriculture and trade should have begun to emerge, and more thorough and permanent measures, resulting from the experience of the operation of the present

Act, may reasonably be expected. The Act specifies a "minimum price" per quarter for wheat and another for oats, for each of the years during which it operates. The yield per acre is assumed in the case of wheat to be four quarters, and in the case of oats five quarters. If the market price falls below the statutory minimum a grant equal to four times the difference between those two prices in the case of wheat, and five times the difference in the case of oats, is payable by the state to the farmer in respect of every acre which has been sown during the season in question. The minimum prices were exceeded in the first three years of the operation of the Act, so that the state was not called on to make payments. The minimum prices are:—

	1917.	1918 and 1919.	1920, 1921 and 1922.
Wheat ..	60s.	55s.	45s. per quarter.
Oats ..	38s. 6d.	32s.	24s. , , ,

Should, therefore, the price of wheat in 1920, 1921, or 1922 fall to 42s. per quarter, the farmers will be reimbursed by the state at the rate of 12s. per acre of land under wheat; again, if oats in one of these years fall to 22s. per quarter, the farmer will receive 10s. for every acre under oats.

Assuming that the Corn Production Act and such measures as follow it are sufficient to meet the commercial difficulty of efficient British corn-production, there still remains the difficulty of the scarcity of farm labour. Arable farming requires at least five times as much labour as pastoral, and no permanently increased production of corn can be expected unless a great quantity of labour can be attracted to the land. A sufficient and lasting

supply of labour can only be obtained in response to the offer of much better remuneration than has been associated with such work in the past, together with conditions of comfort at home at least equal to those which are offered in towns ; in addition, the prize of independence may attract some if they can be given the opportunity to farm on their own account. The remedy appears to lie in improved agricultural wages and reform in rural housing, supplemented by a small-holdings system.

The wages of the agricultural labourer before the war, even allowing for possible perquisites in kind, were notoriously bad. Statistics collected in 1907 offer no better example than an average wage of 21s. 2d. per week in Fife, while the worst cases were those of Norfolk and Dorset, each with an average of 16s. 6d. per week. The average wages in all the counties in the United Kingdom lay between these limits. The Corn Production Act of 1917 deals with this question as well as with that of the farmers' profits. Having so far secured the position of the farmers, it assumes that it has given them the ability to pay better wages, and proceeds to set up machinery, in the form of an Agricultural Wages Board, for fixing the wages of farm labourers. The Board is assisted in making its decisions by reports from local District Wages Committees. On the Central Board, and on the district committees also, the workers are represented, and the system of district committees secures consideration of local variations in cost of living, conditions and customs of work, and the absence or provision of board and lodgings. The rates, when promulgated by the Agricultural Wages Board, have the force of law. The actual rates fixed in the first months of the operation of the system varied between 30s. and 35s. per week, a very great improvement

on the pre-war rates. The improvement in remuneration is greater than appears at first sight, for it is coupled with a shortening of the working day. The Act fixes the maximum hours of work at fifty-four per week in the summer and forty-eight per week in winter, and provides for a Saturday half-holiday, and for overtime rates of pay increased by 25 per cent. on the legal rate for weekdays and by 50 per cent. for Sunday work.

## CHAPTER VII

### POLITICAL THEORY

THERE is no more marked characteristic of the Englishman than his contempt for the mere theorist ; his insistence on deeds, not words. It is notorious that our political problems have, throughout history, been tackled piecemeal, taken as they came, not considered logically, from a consistent philosophic standpoint. If there has been theory underlying action, it has generally been industriously glossed over, or hidden respectably under a palimpsest of legal fictions. But there have been signs recently that this hyper-sensitiveness is somewhat decreasing, signs of the realization that action is likely to be all the more effective and powerful in its results if based upon close thinking and reasoned convictions.

The oft-propounded question whether political fact precedes theory or political theory fact is easily answered. Very occasionally, when he is a man of genuine originality and exceptional power of mind, the thinker is the beginner of great political movements. Much more often the theorist reflects the conditions of his own day, producing a theory to fit the facts, is not a motive force, but simply a critic and commentator. The second class is not necessarily less important for the student than the first ; for the true tendencies of an age are often more clearly discerned in its commentaries than in its annals.

There are other classifications of political philosophers

to be made. There are the thinkers, on the one hand, who are concerned with the discussion of existing conditions ; on the other, there are those who are concerned with the abstract question of the ideal, not what is, but what ought to be. But it should be noted that these two types are not necessarily distinct. Plato's *Republic* and More's *Utopia* are expositions of their authors' conceptions of the ideal state ; but they are also incidentally, and inevitably, extraordinarily good guides to actual political conditions, respectively in ancient Athens and in Tudor England. For, the man possessed of a vision of the perfect society sees it ever as a contrast from the imperfections of existing society ; and to write of the first is usually to write of the second as well. Political theorists may be classified again in accordance with the aspect of their huge subject in which they are particularly interested. There are some who approach it from the point of view of metaphysics, others from that of law, or again, economics, or again, natural science or psychology or history. It is not a question only of from what vista the subject is viewed, but of what part of it attracts attention. It is not only the conclusions political theorists come to but the problems they choose to propound for solution that are of significance to the investigator.

Thus the English theorists of the seventeenth century, having in their mind's eye always and inevitably the great constitutional struggle of their own day, are interested in this momentous question : On what is political authority based ; what is its sanction ? Is it based simply on divine right, the ruler being answerable for his action to God only, or is it not rather based on the will of the commonwealth, the ruler being under an obligation to his subjects to govern for their welfare, and answerable

to them, the relations between ruler and subject being likened to a Social Contract ? The three illuminating expressions in that century, in which the two greatest names are, of course, Locke and Hobbes, are Divine Right, the Social Contract, and, lastly, Sovereignty. For, as thinkers were concerned with the question of the functions and duties of government, so they were led to investigate the essential nature of government, and Hobbes brought out with a force and clearness never before approached the truth that in every political society there must be a person, or bodies of persons, with whom the ultimate force rests, the power to say Yea or Nay, the power to control and to punish, the fulcrum of the whole structure, the *sovereign*.

We can only take a few of the outstanding representative figures. By far the most notable in the eighteenth century is Edmund Burke. Not a professed philosopher, but a statesman, his outlook on the political questions of his day was profoundly philosophic. No question was to him merely transitory and casual ; he saw in it a general significance ; he tried everything by the touchstone of fundamental principle. The wealth and power of Burke's thought were due to a brilliant and poetic imagination, which saw through and around the particular to its universal implication and application. In the second place, Burke possessed a keen realization of the vitality of a political society, and saw in its constitution no mere mechanical contrivance but a pregnant reality, the expression of the spirit of the men who had created it. His point of view was always historical. Every institution was to him hallowed by the process of development in the past which had made it what it was. Growth was a sign of life, and life was sacred. It followed that

Burke had a decided conservative tendency, as all men with a strong sense of reverence are apt to have. What he liked to see was a gradual, unhurried, natural system of adaptation to an altering environment ; he disliked and distrusted all drastic change. His hatred of ill-considered amendment, his deep respect for all that was hallowed by age, led him to extravagant lengths, to distrusting in the future the very development he venerated in the past. The English constitution, as it had been left by the Revolution, seemed to him practically perfect ; it was something so rare, so fine and delicate that to touch it with aught of rudeness was a sacrilege. Furthermore, the Revolution was, to him, the work of the Whigs, and the Whigs, or rather the Old Whigs, the Rockinghamites, the singularly sterile party to which he adhered, could do no wrong. So, again, when the French Revolution broke out, though it was in part the offspring of our own, it was only the points of contrast that he could see ; horrified by the violence that characterized the movement in France, by the rough handling of the social order—rotten it might be, but it *was* order, and so to Burke a thing to be dealt with tenderly—alarmed by the direct challenge to the right of private property (Burke like a good Whig had the strongest faith in that right), his customary breadth of view, his imaginative grasp deserted him, and the turmoil of his own feelings carried him into a frenzy of denunciation. There is much that is true and profound in the *Reflections* and the subsequent treatises on French affairs, but there is also much that is blind and wrong-headed. But when all necessary qualifications have been made, Burke is even to-day, as he was in his own time, still the best exponent of the great guiding principles of the English political system—in his advocacy of the historical,

the imaginative point of view in statesmanship, his contempt for the mere doctrinaire who thinks only in abstract terms and cannot adapt theory to practice in such a way that it really works, in his insistence on the need of tolerance and conciliation in a world inevitably complex because of the vast variety of human types, and therefore for ever in conflict, which is a thing healthy because it is the evidence of vitality.

The next great name to be mentioned is that of a writer who not only was not an avowed political philosopher, but was not primarily interested in polities at all. Adam Smith was an economist; yet he had a most profound influence on the history of political thought in England. Though by no means the first teacher of free trade principles, he was so immeasurably greater than his predecessors that they are unknown names, for the most part, to all save the professed student of Political Economy. All previous teaching on the subject of Free Trade was summed up and made classic in *The Wealth of Nations*, one of the greatest books of the world. It is an economic dissertation, but clearly its root principle has a direct and cogent bearing on politics. It laid down a distinct ruling on the function of government and the nature of the state. Smith's denunciation of Mercantilism, which had been our economic system for centuries, his insistence on the importance of labour as an element in production and the need of freeing the latter from restriction, and his condemnation of all state interference with the natural course of trade, as being prejudicial to industry and commerce, involved the doctrine of circumscribed powers on the part of government. It ought to regard the economic life of the state as outside its jurisdiction, leaving trade, freed of all artificial restrictions, to follow

only the dictates of the natural law of supply and demand.

The theory, thus enunciated, that in one vast sphere of human activity the government will best serve the interests of the community it rules by leaving well alone, had a profound influence on political thought. Political thinkers in the next generation were apt to approach their subject from an economic point of view, only applying what was originally a purely economic doctrine more generally. The Utilitarians owed much to Adam Smith and the Free Trade school. Jeremy Bentham was an avowed disciple, believing whole-heartedly in unlimited freedom of competition, as being productive of the most efficient possible goods at the lowest possible prices, and at the same time securing to the most hard-working and enterprising the reward of their superior activity. What was true in the realm of the economist was true universally. The community was best served when the individuals composing it were left free to develop their own personalities and guide their own fortunes as far as possible without government interference. Through giving full play to the quality of self-reliance and the natural instinct for self-advancement, which involved a zealous spirit of competition, were the best results achieved for the state. This was in healthy reaction against an unintelligent Toryism, which, when not actually impassive, had meant repression and petty exasperating interference.

The Utilitarians came back again and again as the starting-point of their speculations upon their conceptions of the fundamental motives of human conduct. Bentham based his whole philosophy upon the statement, "Nature has placed man under the governance of two sovereign masters, *pain* and *pleasure*." Man was always seeking

to avoid the former and achieve the latter. The elder Mill was even more emphatic than Bentham in his insistence on the essential selfishness of human nature. He believed that the intoxication of power was so intense that its possessor was sure to abuse it to others' detriment. It was because of the inherent selfishness of mankind that governments had to be invented as a check upon its manifestations. Unhappily, into every organized fellowship that he forms man brings the same essential egotism which is innate in him as an individual. The belief that selfishness is the root motive of human action was the fundamental idea, also, of the moral philosophy of the younger Mill. Only with him it had a refinement. The Self-Love or Benevolence controversy had been particularly brisk among English philosophers of the eighteenth century. One of them, Hartley, had enunciated the doctrine of secondary motives. John Stuart Mill adopted this refinement, this important qualification of the hedonist position. His view is based on the principle of association of ideas. The miser starts by valuing the things that money will buy ; then because of the power that the actual gold has to secure these he tends to attach an even greater importance to the intrinsic value of the coins, until he ends by loving the coins for their own sake alone and will not part with them. On the same analogy, it is argued that as the result of experience a man often finds that he gains most by considering others' interests as well as his own. He therefore begins to practise altruism because it pays best. Next he finds that he derives a positive pleasure from such unselfishness ; he ends by finding in it his greatest pleasure. Such reasoning may or may not sound convincing : what Mill was endeavouring to do was to commend the Utilitarians' tenet

to the widespread human instinct, whatsoever its source, enlightened egotism or intuitive benevolence, which likes and admires unselfishness and disinterestedness. In this J. S. Mill showed himself as a transitional force from the original high and dry Utilitarianism. In his *Political Economy* he showed himself in sympathy with Trade Unionism, and not wholly antagonistic to Collectivism. The reason why the Benthamites insisted so strongly upon their conception of human nature was that they were violently at issue with the Intuitionists. The latter, with their belief in the innate conscience, the Benthamites maintained, were building on shifting sand, were sentimentalists or ascetics, were apt to be led astray into an unreal world of metaphysical abstractions. The Utilitarians were essentially experientialists. To discuss the ideally best was a mere waste of time ; experience was the sole guide worth following ; philosophy, to be of use, must be severely practical, coming to grips with facts, considering men's temporal needs, with an eye always on *utility*. "By the principle of utility," says Bentham, "is meant the principle which approves or disapproves of every action whatever, according to the tendency which it appears to have to augment or diminish the happiness of the party whose interest is in question." Thus the watchword of the Benthamites was the celebrated catch-phrase : "The greatest happiness of the greatest number." This was a war-cry against the Toryism which had aimed solely at the happiness of the privileged classes. The younger Mill explains how his principle is derived from a doctrine of human selfishness. "No reason can be given why the general happiness is desirable, except that each person, so far as he believes it to be attainable, desires his own happiness. This

however, being a fact, we have not only all the proof which the case admits of, but all which it is possible to require, that happiness is a good: that each person's happiness is a good to that person, and the general happiness, therefore, a good to the aggregate of all persons."

Such, in the briefest outline, were the general conceptions of the Benthamites. But, as we have seen, it was one of their main principles, inherent in their generalisations themselves, that the thinker must not rest content with generalities, but must be productive in practical suggestion. The Benthamites were all keen reformers, with definite schemes of constitutional, legal, economic and social reform. It will suffice to give a few instances. They were Radicals, believing very strongly in the development of the representative system a great deal further than it had advanced in their own day. The one possible correction to the essential selfishness of government that the elder Mill discerned in his gloomy view of human associations was the strengthening of the representative system, particularly of the middle classes in it and of a House of Commons to stand up against king and peerage. Bentham was an avowed republican. John Stuart Mill, one of the earliest champions of woman's rights and an advocate of equality between the sexes as regards education and industrial occupation, was ardent for the suffrage and political power for women. He was, incidentally, also an advocate of the system of proportional representation, as the only effective method of securing a true representation of the whole country, not merely of localities. Like Burke, he disapproved altogether of the conception that a Member of Parliament is a mere delegate of his particular constituency, maintaining, on the other hand, that he ought to be much more than a voice—a personality,

sent to make the fullest use of his personality in consistently following in the House of Commons the policy he sincerely believes to be in the best interests of the whole community. Because he was so anxious to see the force of true criticism in political life, John Stuart Mill opposed the ballot as a device for protecting cowardice.<sup>1</sup> Bentham, on the other hand, was a supporter of vote by ballot in the interests of electoral purity, as he was of annual parliaments, universal manhood suffrage and single-chamber government. Both he and the elder Mill were strongly hostile to the House of Lords. As regards education the Utilitarians were not at one. Bentham approved of state-aided schools; the younger Mill strongly disapproved. This was more in accordance with ordinary utilitarian principles. "A general state education is a mere contrivance for moulding people to be exactly like one another."

It was in the immense importance that they attached to the free development of the power of each individual to the highest point attainable that the Utilitarians did their greatest service. When unkind things are said about them in contrast to the Humanitarians, it must be remembered that in justice they ought first to be contrasted with the inert reactionary Toryism against which they battled and which in large measure they overthrew. They found repression enforced for the mere sake of repression, a system of "distrust of the people, tempered by fear" in full possession; the free currents of the national life dammed up in every direction. They saw liberty as a great life-giving principle most desperately needed by their own times. If it is true that they took their doctrine

<sup>1</sup> He feared that democracy should involve loss of individuality and character.

to extreme lengths : that is the case with most reformers. Most men who have strong convictions are guilty both of exaggeration of idea and hyperbole of utterance. And if they were indirectly the cause of certain evils by over-emphasising Laisser Fair in the economic sphere, on the other hand, in other spheres their teaching has had none but good results both in their own day and ever since. Concerned very much with the individual, they laid very great stress on the virtues of self-reliance, initiative and industry, and also upon the duty of honest thought and the necessity of freedom of thought, of speech, of discussion; and, finally, upon the obligation of the search for truth. Always they strove to secure practical work demanded by requirements of utility and for the benefit of the whole community, not a mere section of it.

The reaction against Benthamitism was due to dissatisfaction, at times amounting to wrathful indignation, with some of its results. The essential trouble was that it was too cold and stern a creed. It was accused of being low-minded and sordid. The former is the truer criticism. If the Utilitarians insisted on the essential selfishness of human nature, they did not preach selfishness, but social amelioration often involving the subordination of self. On the other hand, their ethical views were too much simplified. They failed to recognise the *social* character of the individual. The human nature they expounded was the human nature of the “economic man.” There has been a great deal of loose and unfair criticism of this personage—the man always actuated by a desire for wealth, a disposition to avoid work, and an inclination to consume costly indulgences. It is no argument to assert the obvious truth which no Utilitarian would have denied, that there are men in the world who are not like this.

It is certainly true that the aggregate regarded from the economic point of view *are* like this. Nor is it legitimate to argue against the division of human nature into water-tight compartments in writing about any art or science ; it is an essential convention of practical discussion and logical reasoning. The writer on music presupposes the music-lover ; he is not, therefore, taken as being committed to the view that all men are music-lovers, or that love of music constitutes the whole of existence. The writer on sport addresses the sportsman ; his doing so does not mean that he believes all men are sportsmen, or that keenness on sport is the only part of manhood. Man is a many-sided animal with many occupations and interests ; but the specialist dealing with one or other of them can only regard man from his particular angle of approach.

This is the merest common sense. The danger arises when the specialist becomes so much absorbed in the importance of his own angle as to imagine that it is the only one that matters ; or, still more, when the fact of the many-sidedness of human interests and the complexity of human nature is forgotten and the man of action or the thinker who is concerned with man in his completeness can only see him from one of those very numerous angles and "simplifies" too much. The most modern economists are careful to make it clear that they are dealing with only one aspect of human activity, and at the same time their conception of their science is more idealist than that of the older school. But it was just here that the Benthamites failed. In so far as they were economists they were perfectly justified in their simplification. Unfortunately, in their capacity as political philosophers—and political philosophers must consider man in his entirety—they came near to making the hypothesis that

the economic man is almost, if not quite, the whole man. They simplified where simplification can only lead to error. There is an economic man, a sportsman, an artist, that can be hypothesised for the sake of specialist argument, but to hypothesise the "average man" in dealing with man in his entirety is a course deeply laid with pitfalls. The "average man" whom the Benthamites presupposed in their political theory in reality belongs to only a small minority. He was of the male sex, sound in mind and body, self-sufficient, the best judge of his own interests. Again, the Benthamites in their animosity against mere sentiment and prejudice made no due allowance for the enormously important fact that in reality men are very largely controlled by sentiment and by prejudice.

Again, it was not only human nature that they oversimplified; they took insufficiently into consideration the enormous complexity of human life and the fact that modern society has become so involved that things, if left to take their own course, do not always go right; they have an unpleasant way of going quite horribly wrong and causing an infinity of trouble and suffering. Nature is apt to be both blundering and ruthless. There was a certain ruthlessness in the theories of those who were all for leaving things to take their course—ruthlessness, and a certain soullessness, an absence of human sympathy and compassion.

The first protest against Laisser Faire came from the humanitarians, such as Lord Shaftesbury, who based their objection to it not so much on any argued theory as on simple pity. The second protest came from men of letters principally, who abhorred Laisser Faire not so much because it was pitiless as because it was, in their view, mean and ugly. If it is true that the great

Utilitarians were personally high-minded men preaching a high-minded creed, it can be quite understood how easily they could be interpreted as, at all events, condoning, and possibly even encouraging, a low and mercenary standard of life. They were narrow, frigid, uninspiring. The feeling of the artist against the Utilitarian school finds expression as early as the times of Robert Southey, who gave vent to his disapproval in his *Colloquies on Society*. Southey, as a political thinker, is remarkably modern, if as a literary artist he is out of date. But the three great names to be mentioned are Carlyle, Ruskin, and Arnold. To Carlyle the doctrines of Laissez Faire were objects for contempt and indignation. The world cried aloud, in his view, for leadership and control, for Kings. Not non-interference, but its contrary—authority, was called for. He had no liking for democracy; it seemed to him a sham. The constitutional reforms which had meant so much to the Utilitarian, such as manhood suffrage and the ballot, were dismissed as mere “emptiness.” Let the men who are conscious of mission, conscious of the capacity to govern, be the rulers of the people. That was the road to reality; modern notions of freedom and self-government were mere quackery. In *Past and Present* the present age, as typified by the workhouses, was contrasted with the England of the Abbot Jocelin de Brakelond in the feudal age. Feudalism was attractive to Carlyle. It typified order and discipline. In his veneration for the king as the man who can, who has power, Carlyle came rather close to the doctrine that “might is right,” very close to the worship of the “Übermensch,” and at least one of his heroes, Frederick the Great, was extraordinarily devoid of all the true heroic virtues. But in his insistence on the need of guidance

and of discipline in a great society Carlyle provided a necessary corrective to the Utilitarians.

Ruskin joined issue with them chiefly as an artist, who demanded a big place in all human life for beauty, for which the Benthamites had never found a place. To him Utilitarianism was something base, material, earthy. He laid all the emphasis on the things of the spirit. He maintained strenuously that it was wrong ever to regard economics as a science by itself ; it should invariably be treated as part of a much larger whole, true economics in the Greek sense (*oīkonomía*), the management of the household. Otherwise the right perspective would be lost sight of, and mere wealth assume an exaggerated importance which should be reserved only for "things of the spirit." The word "wealth" was used in far too restricted a sense. It ought not to be interpreted as merely denoting material commodities, but the sum-total of a man's possessions ; things that might have next to no value in the economic sense of the word, but which might be of the utmost value from the point of view of the highest human faculties. It was not the acquisition of wealth that mattered, but its fair distribution, rational use and enjoyment, most of all our capacity to get out of life the highest type of enjoyment. Not the millionaire, bored by all else save the amassing of money and sometimes even by that, was the wealthy man ; the wealthy man was he who, though perhaps almost destitute of worldly possessions, had the eye to see, ears to hear, the mind to understand, the imagination to express the beauty and wonder that were in the earth. Such is the fundamental thesis of *Unto this Last*. In itself it is hardly a political theory, but it has a necessary corollary, which

does involve a theory of society, which is enunciated both in *Unto this Last* and also in the earlier work, *A Joy for Ever*, originally published under the title of *The Political Economy of Art*. Inasmuch as man was in large part a spiritual being, the state must be clearly recognisable as a community of spiritual beings. The state must, therefore, enormously enlarge its nature and increase its functions. A merely passive government, a government of negations, falls egregiously short of fulfilling its true high mission. It ought to have a positive ideal of beauty, happiness, order, progress. Ruskin, then, advocated state education, compulsory employment, thorough state provision for the old and destitute. There was great emphasis laid on education, on the obligation of the state to give not only intellectual instruction, but to inculcate a moral principle, to enjoin a high standard of character and of work.

Like Carlyle and Ruskin, Matthew Arnold preached the paramount need of authority. In this he was actuated by his intense loathing for the barbarian, the Philistine, by his impatience with the absence of any canons of good taste, any criteria of sound judgment in a democracy untaught, uncultivated. Culture was his panacea, and the means to achieve it an Academy. It was chiefly in the questions of art and literature that he was interested, but his principles have a wider application. The political sympathies of one who desired to establish an absolute standard and an absolute authority, and who showed a very marked appreciation of the splendid work accomplished by Prussian autocracy, are sufficiently obvious. Arnold had a much narrower outlook and a much more restricted influence than either Carlyle or Ruskin; but he illustrates, like them, the artist's revolt against unchecked

individualism and Laisser Faire, and his demand for a great increase in the powers of the state.

The great work of the Benthamites had all been published prior to 1870, and most of them of course much earlier, and the Laisser Faire era is drawing to the close of its effective influence in the seventies ; but even after 1880 one of the greatest of individualists was proclaiming the Laisser Faire principle. In fact, he quite outdid the Benthamites. This was Herbert Spencer. The individualism of the Benthamites is far outdone by that of Spencer, who is vehement and indeed venomous in his detestation of all state interference of any sort or kind. The last of the great Benthamites, John Stuart Mill, had softened the hardness and crudity of the Utilitarian gospel, had modified its conception of the selfishness of human motive, even spiritualised its conception—its mechanical conception—of liberty. A transition in the individualist to a mellower attitude is clear in John Stuart Mill ; there is not a hint of any such development in the series of social and political writings of Spencer, beginning with *Social Statics*, published in 1850, and ending with *The Man Versus the State*, which appeared in 1884. Spencer approached sociology from the standpoint of Natural Science ; humanistic studies, especially political history, he despised as trivial, inchoate, unproductive. His *Synthetic Philosophy* was a vast and extraordinarily ambitious undertaking, which it is perhaps fair to say no one with a sense of humour would have undertaken, and although it makes a great correlated whole, as was intended, it was not a consistent whole, so that without going into such detail as is out of the question in a brief space, it is not possible to give a résumé of his political philosophy. It is best to rest content with the broadest possible outline.

He derives his conception of sociology from his studies of physics and biology, and his leading idea is always that of evolution—not derived from Darwin, it has to be remembered, because he enunciated these theories before the publication of *The Origin of Species*. Humanity is a part of universal nature, and is subject to the same conditions, the same laws. It is involved in a constant process of adaptation to environment, a ruthless and unavoidable discipline which leaves only the fittest to survive. Evolution, so far as the state is concerned, is a development from the stage of barbarism, which is military and in which social relations are determined by status, to the stage of the industrial society, the age of contract.

Such has been the course of social evolution in the past. Its future is known, can be counted upon. It is a movement towards finality, a condition static and perfect, an ideal anarchy. Such a teleological conception of human life—indeed, of anything in nature at all, is thoroughly unscientific, false to all we know of nature, which is that it is a dynamic force, perpetually stirring, always in movement, so sooner finished with one process than she finds another to begin. It is conceivable that there may be in some immensely distant future some such static existence as Spencer conceives; but it is in any case so vastly remote from us that it is of no practical use for us to think about it. Yet Spencer judges all history by the standard of this Golden Age of his, and virtually condemns it all. He does not applaud its efforts towards an approximation to it. He has only abuse for its feebleness. Anarchy is the ideal; therefore all government is bad. The natural process up to the static society is one of the survival of the fittest; any attempt to interfere with that process is condemned. *Laisser Faire* must be absolutely

complete. The state must on no account give poor relief, or supervise public health, or provide education, or colonise, or control trade, or work a postal system. Government is merely the survival of the barbaric past, a thing to be displaced, to be ashamed of. The last of Spencer's political treatises was entitled, *The Man versus the State*. It is concerned with the natural rights of the individual man ; the state is conceived as his enemy. If the state is so thought of, there is little likelihood of its improvement. Spencer, the Radical, is one of the most reactionary of all political thinkers.

But political theorists, who have drawn their inspiration from Natural Science, have had a strong tendency to be reactionaries or pessimists, or both. Huxley draws a depressing picture of man as vainly, pathetically, trying to make headway against an implacable Nature, armed with all the force of a tremendous purpose, the essential character of which he is powerless to control. Buckle, writing before the publication of Darwin's great work, but under the spell of Natural Science, found in climate the most important fact in human history, men being for the most part the prey of natural conditions they could not alter, their fancied freedom of will the merest delusion. The most distressing result of the application of Darwinism to political theory is that the doctrine of the survival of the fittest has been taken as an explanation of warfare, a proof of its inevitability, and a justification of its continuance. It is to be hoped that an end has been brought once and for all to this shallow reasoning, by a conflict which has demonstrated that modern wars, on the whole, tend to involve not the survival of the fittest, but of the *unfittest*.

Natural Science has not proved the most profitable

avenue of approach to the study of human society and the method of argument by analogy from physical and biological facts to those of the world of men is subject to the objections which are always to be made to argument by analogy, in a pre-eminent degree. An avenue of approach which brings us much more closely into touch with the living realities of society has proved to be that of metaphysics, as exemplified at all events in the writings of the Oxford idealists, more particularly T. H. Green, B. Bosanquet, and F. H. Bradley. Their political theory may be summarised as follows. Their individual philosophies may vary, but the fundamentals of their creed are the same. Drawing inspiration partly from Greek thought, partly from that of the modern German idealist school, especially Kant and Hegel, they started with the belief that man, in the Aristotelian phrase, is a "political animal." Human society is not a mere aggregation of millions of disconnected individuals. The conception of the isolation of the individual is not true to reality. The individual is not complete in himself; he cannot be understood save in connection with his fellow-beings. He is what he is because of them. He is part of a complex organism; he is a complex organism in himself. His nature is conditioned first, by heredity, the influence of his parents and their parents, of his ancestry; and second, by environment, the influence of the world of men around him. There is in him no doubt something original and distinctive, which gives him a separate identity; no other living man is exactly the same as he is. But the attributes which he shares in common with his fellows are far more numerous, more powerful, except in a very small minority of cases, than those which distinguish him from them. Moreover, he can only attain to the full realization

of his peculiar self by living contact with other people. It is by contact with other minds that the individual's capacity is enlarged. It is by giving of his own to them and receiving much more than he can give from his fellows that a man attains to the fullest development of which he is capable. He absorbs in himself a social atmosphere, emanating from the world of human beings, of whom he is but one. Always, whether considered historically, biologically, psychologically, man is found to be a member of a community—the family, the tribe, the state. The phrase *The Man versus the State* is untrue to all our knowledge of the facts of human life.

In the second place, just as there is something of the community in every individual, so there is something of the individual in every community. It is never a mere aggregate, purely a numerical entity, or a mechanical contrivance. It is alive, the humanity of all the men and women composing it is breathed as a vital force into it. It is itself a personality, contributed by its members, not a mere sum total of all their different minds or a mere lowest common denominator, but a new creation, their most characteristic expression. Every family has its own atmosphere, every voluntary association like a club or board of directors or a soviet; every kind of state, assuredly every nation. There is a spirit of France, a spirit of Serbia, of England, of the United States. The War strongly brought home this essential truth to many to whom its significance may not have been apparent before.

The community, so conceived, a living being, instinct with life of all its members and inspired by their energy, has a design of its own—the realization of their common aspirations, the consummation of their common purpose,

which can only be reached by means of association. That common purpose is conceived as the fulfilment of the highest development of man—the attainment of the “good life.” Thus, the state is a self-conscious force with a moral purpose. It is not, therefore, the null negative thing postulated by the Laisser Faire school ; government has many functions besides those merely of maintaining order and repressing crime. It has an active part to play in securing the conditions required for the realization of the good life. State-interference is not an evil, to be reduced to a minimum so that the laws of nature may work untouched by man ; it is a good and necessary thing, as it is the means whereby man, no mere puppet, but a creature with self-determination, foresight, hopes and ideals may actively participate in the development of his kind.

Such are the leading political conceptions of the Oxford idealist school, whose inception dates from 1880, the period which marks the decline of the individualists. The foremost among them was T. H. Green, and the greatest work they produced was his *Principles of Political Obligation*. Various criticisms have inevitably been brought against them. In the first place, they have been accused of an “intellectualist” simplification of human conduct and motive similar to that of the individualists ; and it may be conceded that metaphysics may profitably be flavoured with a little psychology ; the study of the “common mind” by that of the individual mind. But this does not in any way invalidate the fundamental conception of the social character of man and the relation between the community and its several members.

In the second place, it has been objected to this school of thought that it tends to produce a deification of the

state, making it the source of right, the repository of truth, of morality, its service the individual's sole justification. Such is the Hegelian philosophy and the German point of view. And, again, it has to be admitted that some of the Oxford school have shown a Hegelian tendency. On the other hand, Green himself and, indeed, the best exponents of the school have never encouraged the cult of the state. They have carefully distinguished between society, a universal thing, on the one hand, and the state, the political combination, on the other. They have seen that association as only one of many, to which a man may belong and owe fealty ; and if they have regarded the state as the first of all associations, the larger unit in which the others are contained, they have not denied the separate existence and separate rights of the other bodies ; and, at the same time, they have regarded the state itself only as part of a larger whole, the great universal brotherhood of man ; for these thinkers have been cosmopolitans.

The search for truth must be prosecuted, whatever its consequences, even were these the destruction of human effort and enterprise. Yet men cannot help judging theories, not only in accordance with their approximation to truth, of which it is very difficult to judge, but by their practical results upon the men who hold them to be true. The arid creed of a Herbert Spencer has not had—in its very nature could not have—any practical results beneficial to human society. But many of the men who have become convinced of the truth of the idealistic philosophy of the state have borne fruit and, believing in self-realisation by means of the “service of man,” have spent themselves in public work for the amelioration of social conditions.

The objection of the psychologists to both the

individualists and the idealists, on the ground of their being too "intellectualist," has been mentioned. The beginning of the application in England of the new science of psychology to the new science of sociology is to be found in Walter Bagehot's *Physics and Politics*, published in 1873. Bagehot's purpose is to find from ascertainable facts, particularly in respect to primitive times, what have actually been the mental processes which have gone to the formation of societies. His main contention is that there is evidence of two processes—first, of the gradual formation among primitive peoples of what he terms "a cake of custom," custom providing the stability without which society cannot make its first step in civilisation; secondly, the gradual breaking away from the stage of custom to that of an ordered freedom, without which breaking away there can be no further progress. Anarchy is the first foe to be overcome; inertia the second. The two chief contemporary representatives of the psychological school are Professors W. McDougall and Graham Wallas. In his *Human Nature in Politics*, the latter attacks the Oxford school as being far too *a priori* in its methods, and too prone to suppose that human action is based on a process of reasoned thought. He demands, in our extraordinarily complex modern society, an *a posteriori* method which investigates actual contemporary conditions and recognises that the average man is not "intellectual," and that he is for the most part guided by habit, unreasoned impulse, sense-impressions. Advertisement, for example, is one of the most potent elements in contemporary political life, as in every sphere; but its appeal is entirely non-rational.

The "realism" of the psychologists is shared by the lawyer-school, whose object has been not so much to

expound a theory as to elucidate the ideas immanent in political institutions as reflected in law. The great service rendered by Sir Henry Maine in his *Ancient Law*, and by others who have done the same sort of work, has been their use of the "historical method," their utilisation of such existing evidence as the Pentateuch, the Homeric poems, and similar early literature to discover what were the actual origins of the civilised society which exists to-day. Perhaps few of those who have proclaimed the original, the natural rights of man have really believed in the actual existence of that golden age in the past which their theory seemed to postulate: nevertheless, the investigation of the historical evidence concerning primitive associations has been a wholesome corrective to purely fanciful political thinking.

It is not possible to do more than mention those constitutional lawyers, of whom Professor A. V. Dicey has been the chief—who have explained the fundamental principles inherent in our system of government. Rather more should be said of the work of F. W. Maitland, who, inspired by Gierke and dealing specifically with mediæval ideas, has drawn attention to the immensely important question, even more pregnant with meaning for our own day than in the Middle Age, of the inter-relations of societies, of groups. Is the political society, the state, merely one among many other groups, all having a separate life and validity of their own, or is it the sum total of all groups?

That query brings us close to problems very pressing at the present time, and in particular to the question of what type of Socialism is to be predominant in our midst. For there are different types of Socialism; and between the earliest type and the most recent there is

but little in common. The greatest names among the socialists of the nineteenth century are those of a German, Karl Marx, Frenchmen like St. Simon, Fourier, Louis Blanc. They did not have a great deal of direct influence on Great Britain, and the type of Socialism which has been most influential with us up to now has been an indigenous growth. The Marxian system was definitely revolutionary, the method a relentless class-warfare, the organisation of the forces determined to destroy the existing order being international. The Marxians detested palliatives and compromise as subtly inimical to their radical policy. The "Social Democratic Federation," founded in 1881 by H. M. Hyndman, represented Marxian doctrines in England. The most distinguished member was William Morris; but the source of his inspiration was far less Karl Marx than his own instincts as an artist, his hatred of modern industrialism because it ousted beauty, because the minute specialisation required by enormous production took away the joy in work of mediæval craftsmanship. Marx found delight in contemplating the process of revolution, the merciless class conflict; Morris had in his mind's eye always the new society that the revolution will produce, the serenely beautiful Utopia that he described in *News from Nowhere*.

The type of Socialism which has just been described as indigenous in Great Britain is that known as Fabianism. It is so distinct from the Marxian type as to be in some notable respects its complete antithesis. The Marxian believed in revolution and violence; the Fabian in evolution and a process which may be described as one of "peaceful penetration," the gradual infusion of the new ideas into the community by gentle insistence, by argument, by discussion. Such is the method, which is in

itself an aim—the conversion of the world at large, by an appeal not to their fears, but to their reason. The further object is the collective ownership of wealth, the control of all “unearned increment” by the state; and by “unearned increment” the Fabians mean not only rent from land, from the ownership of mines and other minerals, but any wealth which is due to the advantage which a particular individual has over his fellows, whether that advantage be one of social position, or superior education. The Socialism of the Fabians, therefore, is State Socialism. But they have no wish to enforce such a system on an unconverted people; it must, when it comes, be securely founded upon the convinced support of public opinion. The movement of the Fabians may be described as “constitutional.” Not impatient of the slow process of reformation, it desires to make use of existing institutions to achieve its ends, of legislation through Cabinet and Parliament, of orderly common action among the workers, through Trade Unionism. The movement towards state ownership, the complete nationalisation of industry, involves another process as a necessary corollary—the reformation of the state itself, a transition from the oligarchical state of to-day to a truly democratic state, in which the people who create the wealth really do control it, in which labour and capital are one, the workers themselves possessing the capital of industry, as well as the profits accruing from it, in which also the people do truly govern themselves.

English Collectivism, of which the most outstanding exponents are the Webbs and Bernard Shaw, has clearly this in common with the idealist position, that it sees in society a living organism, and perceives an essential unity between the purposes of the individual and of the

state ; and between the men whose inspiration is the teaching of the Oxford School and those whose inspiration is Fabianism there is much common ground. Collectivism may be said with justice to have been the representative political creed of the end of the century as Benthamism was of its early years ; and although the Fabians have not directly produced legislation in the way that Bentham did, it is undoubtedly true that Fabianism is the theoretical counterpart of recent state interference in just the same way as Utilitarianism was the counterpart of *Laisser Faire*.<sup>1</sup> If its success cannot be termed phenomenal, yet the process of the policy of peaceful penetration has been very striking and important ; and it is largely due to Fabian propaganda that many who, entirely ignorant of its real signification, regarded the word Socialism with horror and perturbation thirty years ago have since adopted Socialistic views themselves without realising it, and now do recognise it without any horror at all.

There have been more recent socialist developments in Great Britain than Fabianism—developments of the twentieth century. Fabianism has been arraigned on two counts—first as being bureaucratic, second as being too slow and too passive. It is true that the Collectivists, realising the necessity of skilled government and leadership in the reformed state they desire, lay great stress on the expert government official. What else does this amount to, exclaims such a critic as Mr. Hilaire Belloc in his *The Servile State*, than the creation of a new autocracy of the state, or else oligarchy of officialdom ? It is merely old despotism writ large. Again, Fabianism is spurned by the radical impetuous socialist because it is too slow,

<sup>1</sup> E. Barker, *Political Thought . . . from Spencer to the Present Day*, p. 215.

too careful, too compromising, too willing to make terms with the institutions of present capitalist society. To such it may seem a betrayal. Evil things, they think, should not be tinkered with, but utterly destroyed. They hark back to the Marxian revolutionary programme. Many of them do not believe in state-socialism at all. They hate it, indeed, as much as the capitalist society. They wish to sweep away the state altogether, and to substitute the purely economic association, the occupational group, the syndic or the soviet or the guild. The more moderate of these critics of the state are the guild-socialists, who, inspired by the mediaeval idea of the craft-guild, would make corporations of artizans autonomous, each controlling its own affairs and the use of the produce of its industry. It is recognised that the relation of guild with guild would require regulation, and this function, together with the management of such common interests as foreign affairs, would be left to the state, which would become simply a collection of industrial corporations, existing for their benefit and endowed with the few residual powers not reserved to the several guilds.

The more drastic opponents of the state—the syndicalists—find no place for it at all in their scheme. The very idea of it, according to them, belongs to the servile past ; the realities of human existence are economic, and only associations founded in accordance with economic consideration are any longer logical and necessary. There must be no parleying, therefore, with the state ; it must go. The constructive work of Lenin in Russia to-day would appear to be the superimposition of a system of “workmen’s councils,” appropriate to an industrialised community, upon a country in the main agricultural and rural, possessed already of the nucleus of a popular

system adapted to its needs in the Zemstva that are indigenous to Russia. Unhappily schemes entirely subversive of the state inevitably produce anarchy, a certain evil, and none can as yet tell what manner of building would that be that is founded on group consciousness only.

Much of contemporary political theory is a reaction against the influence of locality in our social relations. This is seen in the crusade for Proportional Representation, as it is seen in Syndicalism and Guild-Socialism. It is occupation, not mere topographical contiguity that matters, it is urged. Yet geography cannot be ignored. Distance and proximity are immensely potent factors. People living near together are forced to decide their relations with one another. The problem of the interconnection of different groups, whatever their character, has got to be faced. If they are to have dealings one with another—and they have to have them, for all industry hangs together, and each craft cannot segregate itself—some common authority is inevitable. And that common authority, the symbol of unity in diversity—what is it but the state?

These questions are not merely abstract. They are clearly the most pressing problems of our time. The result of the Industrial Revolution, of the enormous increase in the organisation of Labour in the nineteenth century has been to intensify class and occupational consciousness; and if the War has strongly revived national consciousness, we have still to solve the problem of how to reconcile—if at all—the national idea with the idea of the syndic or the guild, that of the unitary state with that of the independent or semi-independent group.

Contemporary political theories have several strongly marked characteristics. There is a distinct anti-intellec-

tualism, an insistence upon the complexity of modern society and the diversity of its elements and, therefore, upon the study of the mind, which is not simple, but itself a complex of all manner of sense-impressions and non-rational processes. There is a distrust of purely idealist thought as being too abstract; no attempt to discover a transcendental unity; a tendency to ask whether a theory works. The place of transcendentalism has been usurped by Pragmatism. We are intensely aware that this is a "pluralistic universe," so vast, so complicated that the attempt to discover unity as its principle and its explanation seems a hopeless task. The more knowledge we acquire the more we recognise infinity. Analogous to the tendency in general philosophy, which substitutes psychology for metaphysics, is the tendency in political theory. It is apt to discredit the state in favour of the group, to regard sovereignty itself not—as we always used to be taught on the Hobbes and Austin principle—as necessarily single, but multiple, to look upon the state either as a relict of a barbarian past to be utterly deprived, or as a mere federation of independent communities.

In the Great War two conceptions of Empire have been pitted against one another—that of the German Empire, in which the unitary state was absolute and centralisation complete, and that of the British Empire, in which the principle of decentralisation is given free play, in which the bond is federation. Whether we look to the question of our industrial organisation at home or of the constitution of our Empire abroad, or of the international relations of the world at large, the great problem of the day alike for the political philosopher and the practical statesman evidently is that of federation, of the means of securing unity in diversity in a pluralistic universe.

## CHAPTER VIII

### CAPITAL AND LABOUR

THE industrial and commercial history of Great Britain since the middle of the eighteenth century has been characterised by the greatly increased scale on which enterprises have been conducted, a change which has involved the amassing of gigantic stocks of capital on the one hand and the advent of a multitude of wage-earners on the other. The old picture of the independent domestic worker producing in freedom with his own tools and material faded, and gave place to a battle-piece in which the two forces of "Capital" and "Labour" were to be seen arrayed in opposition. The latest age exhibits yet a third picture, still unfinished, of a road to industrial peace built on negotiation and better understanding between the parties, fostered by government encouragement and guidance. No rapid solution was possible; the clear and definite differentiation of the two factors of production came as a new and unknown thing with the Industrial Revolution, the existence and nature of its attendant problems were but slowly realised, and their solution, in face of strong economic forces and unripe political opinion, is yet incomplete. Nevertheless, the history of the last hundred years is one of continued improvement in the situation.

Experience soon began to show that the wage-earners were at a disadvantage in obtaining their due, although

some excuse was made for many employers on the ground of the compelling force of keen competition. The doctrine of Laisser Faire, the idea that every individual of the community, left to himself, would seek his own best interests, and that therefore the state as a whole would attain to the greatest wealth and the best application of the system of division of labour so clearly explained in *The Wealth of Nations*, was the guiding principle of British statesmen as they faced the new industrial problems, so that it was only slowly that they appreciated the magnitude of the growing evils around them, and only gradually that they could be brought to abandon their detached standpoint, either to step into the arena themselves or to allow the workpeople to organise their own methods of defence.

The employers were under many temptations, selfishness and indifference apart, to buy their labour in the cheapest market, without care for the effect on their employees. It would have required a great deal of fore-thought and foresight on the part of the first owners of great factories to anticipate the needs of their employees for comfort and health while at work, and, absorbed as they were in the business side of their work, in the use of the new instruments of production for increased manufacture and the pushing of their wares in wider markets, they were seldom likely to give much attention to problems of construction and organisation designed to prevent evils not yet familiar. The evils grew with the system, and when sufficiently obvious, called for redress. Redress appeared to mean increased expenditure on production, difficult to bear in the face of unfettered competition with manufacturers less troubled by feelings for the welfare of their workers, or producing on a larger scale,

and, therefore, more cheaply. The possibility of the output of the workers increasing with better health and pleasanter conditions was lost sight of, although in the end experience proved its truth even in cases where the actual hours of work were very considerably shortened. The connivance of the consumer with the "sweating" employer by preferring his goods because of their cheapness was then, as now, unconscious as a rule; the moral responsibility for buying indiscriminately in the cheapest market is still too little realised by the retail buyers of the community, and their difficulty in distinguishing the really cheap from the sweated product is certainly as powerful an excuse for them as ever. The employers, then, self-interested, in the dark as to changing conditions, and subject to economic pressure, were actuated by a strong tendency to spend as little on the amelioration of factory conditions and on wages as possible, a situation which was certainly not improved by the substitution of the impersonal limited liability company for the single employer, or small group of partners.

Against this tendency it was the business of the work-people to fight. Their position was strategically weak. They had a knowledge of the ratio of supply and demand for labour inferior to that of the masters; they were often in dire need of money, and unable to turn from an employer to look for a better bargain, as he, with much better hope of success, might turn from them to find others who would not refuse his terms; lastly, the prospect of a single workman exacting conditions as to, let us say, the ventilation of a factory or the safety of a mine, before accepting employment therein is too ludicrous to require further comment. If this were true of men and women, how much more so of little children!

It was in the field of children's work, indeed, that the state first saw that it was its duty to interfere, and to insist on better conditions of accommodation and the restriction of working hours. Legislation was afterwards extended to women and children, and in special circumstances to men, but throughout the nineteenth century state interference, although always growing in amount, was confined to the conditions under which work was done. The complementary side of industrial reform, the regulation of wages, is not written in the statute book but in the annals of Trade Unionism. Only at the very end, by the Trade Boards Acts, did the state add the wages question to the matters in which it would interfere. The history of the labour problem in the nineteenth century, therefore, falls into two clearly defined sections, one concerned with the Factory Acts and the other with trade unions.

The evils which, under the factory system, were seen to require remedy, were not all the fruit of that system. A wrong done to a few workers in a rural workshop or by the hearth of the domestic weaver was less obvious than the same wrong done to a great number collected in one factory ; the undoubted overworking of children at domestic looms during the eighteenth century and of pauper children farmed out under the rotten poor-law administration of that time, passed almost unnoticed. The same ill-treatment of large groups of factory children was more apparent, and soon called for protest. The factories also brought their own evils : overcrowding in work-rooms and sleeping-rooms ; relays of child workers keeping filthy beds in uninterrupted use day and night ; unfenced machinery, with its many accidents, and fatal accidents, too ; and perhaps worst of all, the tyranny of

the untiring steam-engine which allowed no relaxing of attention to the monotonous task of the tenders of the machines.

The first Factory Act was very limited in scope. Its date is 1802. It applied only to children, and mainly to cotton-mills, for it was in Manchester, among the crowds of poor-law apprentices, that the bad conditions had first come to light ; the factory system had hardly yet begun in the woollen manufacture. These wretched children, sold like cattle in fifties and hundreds to the highest bidder, under the guise of apprenticeship in accordance with the law of Elizabeth, toiled long hours urged by brutal treatment, and sometimes by actual torture, were often without proper food or sleeping accommodation, without education, intellectual, technical, or moral, and were sometimes the victims of the immorality of those placed over them. At full age they left the factories deformed, mutilated, or diseased, and entirely unequipped with any knowledge which would help them to earn a living. Such conditions were certainly not universal, but they were sufficiently widespread to constitute a glaring social evil. Later, the victims of the system ceased to be pauper children only, as the growing need of poorly paid parents or the callousness of avaricious ones sent children from the family circle also to earn a pittance under these appalling conditions. Perhaps the best comment on the condition of factory children is to be read between the lines of the Act of 1802 itself. It demanded that floors and ceilings of work-rooms should be white-washed twice a year, and that there should be enough window space to secure sufficient ventilation ; it required the provision of two sets of clothing a year for each apprentice ; it provided for the separation of the sleeping

accommodation of the sexes, and ordered the use of a number of beds at least sufficient to obviate the need for sleeping more than two in a bed. Children were not to work more than twelve hours a day, and night work was forbidden for them. Instruction, educational and religious, was to be given them in accordance with the requirements of the old apprenticeship law. The Act, moderate as were its demands, failed entirely, because its enforcement was placed in the hands of a local inspectorate, inevitably corrupted in favour of the local employers. Its importance lies in its being the first practical departure from *Laisser Faire*. The Act was not so regarded by its originator, the elder Sir Robert Peel, who was a firm adherent to the policy of non-interference. To him it was an unique measure to meet a special evil. But it proved to be the first of a long series of Factory Acts. The old Tudor policy framed to meet the new conditions of the beginning of the modern era in history, had been one of close regulation. In domestic affairs it broke down with the collapse of local administrative organisation at the Civil War ; in colonial policy it appeared damned by its failure to hold the American colonies ; its last belated defeat was in commerce, where the repeal of the Corn Laws established non-interference long after reaction had set in in other spheres. Now the whole trend of British government is towards greater state control, and the complete nationalisation of whole branches of economic enterprise lies in the field of practical politics. In relation to this overwhelming tendency the Act of 1802 stands as a tiny beginning, as a first recognition, in fact, of the need of state protection for workers which was not yet admitted in theory.

The limitation of hours of work, and the prohibition of night work, were re-enacted in 1819 and 1831 with little

modification ; the former fixed the minimum age of employment at nine years, while the latter included "young persons" up to eighteen years of age. No Act was effective, however, until state inspection of factories was instituted by Lord Shaftsbury's measure in 1833. This Act was the outcome of a considerable inquiry into factory conditions. Narrators of the story of early factory days are sometimes tempted to dwell on the arresting features of the abuses of the system, suggesting thereby, unintentionally often enough, that the whole body of factory owners was no less than criminal in its misuse and neglect of the employees. It should, in fairness, never be forgotten that bad conditions were not universal. The inquiry of 1833 revealed such dissimilarity between factories—almost exemplary ones here and bad ones there, the worst generally small ones struggling against the bigger and more prosperous ones for a footing in the market—that they were unable to recommend any uniform treatment for the whole country except in the matter of child labour ; they accordingly separated this feature as a field specially suited for action, and the Act of 1833 is therefore one more—the last—of the series of statutes by which the state attempted to improve the lot of children alone. It limited the hours of work for those between nine and thirteen years to nine hours per day, and between thirteen and eighteen years to twelve hours per day ; for all these night work was forbidden. The machinery for government inspection by Factory Inspectors instituted by the Act is still important ; it checks breaches of the law, so that since 1833 Factory Acts have been effective ; also most valuable material for the study of factory conditions with a view to such further remedial enactments as may be necessary is

collected in the able periodical reports made by these inspectors to the central department.

The staunchest advocates of *Laisser Faire* had come to understand that non-interference would not do for the children, and it was but a short step farther to realise that women, too, were in need of assistance in the industrial struggle for fair conditions. Moreover, if children were to be protected in the interests of the health of the present generation, the women should be protected in the interests of the next. In 1844, therefore, the Act of 1833 was extended to include women. In 1847 the "Ten Hours Act" restricted the actual working hours of women and children to ten per day. When it was found that the restrictions as to hours were evaded by a system of shifts in which it was never clear when a hand commenced or left off work, an Act was passed (1850) confining the working hours of women and young persons to the period between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. The accidental omission of children from this Act was corrected in 1853.

In the exclusion of very young children from factories and mines, the Factory Acts have been reinforced by the Education Acts, the last of which retains all children at school up to the age of fourteen years, and proposes to withdraw them from work for educational training for part of their time up to the age of eighteen years. The scope of factory legislation has slowly widened since the Acts already described laid down the general lines; factories of all kinds have been included, and workshops also. Special attention was demanded, however, at an early date by mines. The conditions hidden underground were worse than those visible above. Children of six years old worked there for long hours, hardly ever seeing the light of day, but sitting hour after hour in the dark to

open and shut doors for the passage of pit ponies with their trucks. To older children heavier work fell, and both sexes were employed. Adults and children alike suffered from inhalation of coal-dust in the badly ventilated galleries, and lung complaints were common. An Act of 1842 took more drastic steps than any of those applied to the textile mills above ground. The employment in mines of women and girls, and of boys under ten years of age, was forbidden, regulations for safety in illumination were to be enforced to secure a decrease in the frequency of serious mine explosions, and proper ventilation was insisted on.

The Acts which directly defended women and children indirectly helped the men. Where all worked together, improved conditions benefited the men as well as the others. In the matter of hours the men benefited where they were assisted by women in tending the machines, since when the women went the machines had to stop working ; the force of this is illustrated by the strenuous attempts to evade the earlier Factory Acts in the matter of hours so that the women and children might go on working with the men. Some later factory legislation deliberately provides for both sexes and all ages. It comprises those measures enforcing precautions in dangerous trades, such as some chemical and explosive manufactures. The multiplicity and diversity of dangerous occupations in modern manufacture has made necessary some simpler machinery for control than parliamentary enactments. Since 1864, therefore, the Home Secretary has been empowered to issue orders regulating dangerous trades.

To inspection, the principal weapon for the enforcement of the Factory Acts, has been added in recent years the system of workmen's compensation. The first Work-

men's Compensation Act was passed in 1897, and in 1906 it was extended to include all classes of employees, even down to domestic servants, whose wages amounted to less than £250 a year. Since the responsibility for all personal injury, and the obligation to give compensation, fall on the employer in every case where the absolute wilful neglect of the injured workman cannot be proved, the former is bound in his own interest to see that such statutory requirements as the fencing of machinery, and the Home Office orders as to dangerous trades, are fully complied with in his establishment.

At sea, as well as on land, there are conditions of work to be supervised in the interests of health and safety, and certain provisions of the Merchant Shipping Acts are counterparts of the Factory Acts, and aim at securing proper conditions at sea. The crews of British vessels have a statutory right to sufficient accommodation, and dangerous overloading of ships is guarded against in the regulations concerning Plimsoll's line.

But if the doctrinaire attitude of *Laisser Faire* hindered reform in regard to conditions in factories and the treatment of those who were weak by reason of age or sex, still more did it impede action in regard to contracts between masters and workpeople as to wages and in regard to men, for here the remedy appeared to lie in the direction of defensive combinations of workers, and of such combinations a mistrust amounting almost to terror had been engendered by the prospect of the French Revolution. Combinations of workmen meant power to withstand excessive demands from employers, and that probably meant disputes, and disputes might end in bloodshed, or even in a break-up of the social order. Disputes had arisen before the Industrial Revolution,

for there had occurred a few strikes, the main interest of which survives in their value as evidence of the beginnings of the cleavage between capitalist and wage-earner, which has been noted in an earlier chapter as preceding the great mechanical changes themselves. To these strikes were added machine-breaking riots by workers who feared that machinery would rob them of their occupations. The fear of working-class risings seemed well founded. Wages were very low. The labour market was no longer fed solely by skilled men, but by men skilled and unskilled alike, by women and by children, for the demand for skill diminished as the functions of machinery were elaborated. Consequently the supply of labour increased even faster than production expanded, the labour market was overstocked, and employers were able to obtain exceedingly cheap labour, and to indulge their wish to produce cheaply and push sales. The only defence of the workers would have been to resist in a body. The individual who manfully refused to accept unjust terms was immediately replaced by one of the many who, of weaker principle or, more often, in greater need, were only too glad to accept such terms as were offered. The remedy seemed to be to combine, to subscribe to a fund to support workers in their struggle against their masters, and by a united refusal of their terms to force the capitalists to offer better terms before they could obtain sufficient workers. In other words, the most apt solution of the problem was the trade union supported by accumulated trade union funds, and ready and able to declare a strike if other methods failed.

This was for long impossible. In 1799 and 1800 Combination Acts were passed forbidding all associations of workers for securing advances in wages, obtaining

shorter or better hours of work, or "for preventing or hindering any person or persons from employing whomsoever he, she, or they shall think proper to employ in his, her or their business." Such combinations were made and carried on secretly under the guise of friendly societies, but no development of Trade Unionism into the power we know it to be to-day was possible under such conditions. Through the early years of the long depression, after the Napoleonic wars, the workers were deprived of power to resist attempts to thrust on them more than their share of the burden ; the policy of *Laisser Faire* had been twisted to mean free play for the capitalist class *only* in industry. The more astute economists of the school of Ricardo saw this, and took up the case so ably prepared behind the tailor's shop of Francis Place. The Combination Acts were repealed in 1824, but the gain of the workers was rather the moral one of a sense of independence than a material one, for although there was an outbreak of strikes which led Parliament by the application of the conspiracy laws to restrict the action of trade unions within very narrow limits in 1825, none of these early strikes brought victory to the workmen. But gradually as the lessons were learned, the unions became stronger. The idea of one union for all trades was tried and rejected, and the more highly skilled trades soon developed their own organisations. The amount of skilled labour in any trade is limited, and can be increased only so rapidly as new hands can be trained.<sup>1</sup> The positions of skilled workers is therefore much stronger in the labour market than that of those in unskilled occupations. While trade unions flourished early, therefore, in skilled trades, in unskilled trades the first successful attempts date

<sup>1</sup> Supplemented later by the Trade Union Congress.

only from the time of the London dock strike of 1889. If, for instance, dock labourers struck, it was not difficult to replace them by men who were not dock labourers, but who possessed that physical strength which was the only important qualification for the task ; but if engineers struck, and if the majority of engineers were in the trade union, then the employers had only the alternatives of yielding wholly or in part to the demands of the men, or else refusing the demands point-blank and fighting to a finish. It was, indeed, among engineers that the first big rich union, the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, was formed, and to-day the most powerful unions are in skilled trades, such as engineering, mining and railway transport. An important advance in the organisation of the unions occurred in the middle of last century, when the practice was adopted of appointing from among their own number a staff of salaried officials, of whom the secretary is the chief, devoting their whole time to the administration of their union.

All this time the unions were in a precarious legal position ; it was only too easy to overstep the narrow limits allowed them, so rendering a strike a breach of the laws against conspiracy. It was not till 1875 that trade unions were legally recognised and this menace removed. They were no longer allowed to strike on questions of wages and hours alone, and it is quite as familiar an event now for disputes to turn on other questions, the position of non-unionists, and the like. One other legal point of importance occurred on the purely industrial side of Trade Unionism. By a legal decision in the Taff Vale Case, in 1901, it was decided that trade unions could be sued corporately for torts. The plea of the unions was that a union had no individuality before the law and, therefore,

could not be sued as a union ; for example, if an employer decided to sue a union for loss caused by a strike he could only sue individual members by name, which would mean also that he could only recover from their private means and not from the trade union funds. The unions lost their case, but only temporarily, for the Trade Disputes Act of 1906 reversed the Taff Vale decision. The last of the long series of legal hindrances to trade union action in industrial disputes was thus removed.

The work of trade unions in raising wages and in improving hours and conditions of work for men has been highly successful. The methods of achieving reform have often been disturbing to industry, but this was inevitable at first. The strength of trade unionism lay, and still lies ultimately, in the power to strike—the power to refuse to work at all, to cut off all union labour if better terms are not offered. The strike is the act of rejecting the terms proposed by the employers in the labour market. Fortunately, the later history of Trade Unionism showed a growing willingness to forgo the strike, and the evolution of the method of negotiation has resulted. The growing organisation of labour having been met by the organisation of employers, it came to be realised at length that both unions and employers associations had attained a status in which they could enter into and honour formal agreements. The method of choosing an independent arbitrator came first as a means of settling disputes without going to the length of a strike or lock-out, but later the method known as conciliation, in which representatives of both sides met and discussed the points in dispute and arrived at settlement, became more common. Great assistance has been given in arbitrating and in presiding over meetings for conciliation by the Board of Trade,

which has often provided experts for the purpose. The settlement, in particular, of rates of wages, whether by strikes or in more peaceable ways, has been a business for which trade unions have been peculiarly fitted. Technical distinctions between occupations and conditions of working are numerous and subtle, and a modern table of rates of wages in any trade is an elaborate document. For preparing such schedules, the best imaginable parties are employers on the one hand and representatives of the workmen's union on the other, who can bring minute practical knowledge to bear on the problem.

The method of conciliation has received the seal of official approval in the Trade Boards Act of 1909. By this Act the British Government adopted in principle a device previously tried in Victoria, Australia. Trade Boards exist to anticipate wages disputes; they are not occasional bodies to settle disputes, but permanent joint boards of workers' representatives and employers' representatives which fix wages from time to time. Wages so fixed have the force of law. Each trade board is concerned with one industry only; those set up in 1909 were few in number, and their constitution was directed chiefly against the sweating of women workers, as in the case of the Cranley chainmakers. The scope of the Act has recently been extended to include a number of additional occupations.

The history of the nineteenth century and after, so far as it concerns the relations of capital and labour, is encouraging. It started with the new feature of a wage-earning class suffering much hardship in its work for capitalistic industry. Wage-earners have increased greatly in number, and invested capital has grown enormously in quantity. The two opposing forces seemed to be growing in power

that the struggle between them might be the more stupendous. Yet the warfare following the repeal of the Combination Acts has given place very largely to the peaceful settlement of disputes. The striking fact becomes evident that an improvement in the relations of capital and labour has taken place side by side with a strengthening of the organisations, defensive and offensive, of the opposing interests. It is to the lasting credit of the Sub-Committee appointed by the war-time Ministry of Reconstruction to consider the relations between employers and employed, that they seized on this fact and rightly interpreted it. It is because these opposing interests are so strongly organised that their difficulties can be most easily settled, and it is in the industries where Employers Associations and Trade Unions are strongest, that the Sub-Committee (the Whitley Committee as it is usually called, after its chairman) suggested the fullest extension of the method of conference and conciliation. For industries well organised on both sides the system of Joint Standing Industrial Councils was suggested in the first Whitley report, dated March, 1917.

These "Whitley Councils" resemble Trade Boards in that they are permanent bodies representative of both capital and labour. They differ from Trade Boards in that they are not statutory but purely voluntary, and that their decisions are not enforced by law, but owe their value to the good faith which each side should be able to have in the other because it is strongly organised and truly representative. They, therefore, differ also from those meetings of representatives of employers and employed which have met from time to time to settle specific questions of dispute, for although, like them, they are not statutory bodies and rely for the upholding of

their decisions on the good faith and representative characters of the opposing organisations, they are not to meet merely to settle particular disputes, but are to be permanent bodies meeting regularly to discuss difficulties, to suggest improvement, and largely to forestall disputes. To descend to details. The Committee divide all industry into three groups. In *Group A* they place "industries in which organisation on the part of employers and employed is sufficiently developed to render the Councils representative"; *Group B* is to include "industries in which either as regards employers or employed, or both, the degree of organisation, though considerable, is less marked than in *Group A* and is insufficient to be regarded as representative"; the last group, *Group C*, includes "industries in which organisation is so imperfect, either as regards employers or employed, or both, that no associations can be said adequately to represent those engaged in the trade." Of these three groups the first and last are, generally speaking, definite: trades falling in either can readily be assigned to their group. *Group B* is less exact, including some examples very nearly ripe for inclusion in the first group and others only just beyond the last. The proposals seek first, the establishment of a full organisation of councils in the advanced group, and, second, the application of the system to the lower groups in such modified forms as will help them to advance in organisation until they become fitted for the complete system applicable to *Group A*.

The complete system is to consist for each trade of a joint standing industrial council for the whole country, and, subsidiary to this, district councils, and smaller bodies still for industrial establishment or works, these smallest bodies being known as "works committees."

The establishment of a joint standing industrial

council in an industry postulates one Employers' Association and one Trade Union (or, at least, a very small group) covering the whole country. The scheme is to be taken up voluntarily by these bodies, and the two sides are to agree as to representation on the council, the constitution of the council, and the somewhat delicate question of the chairmanship. In all this the industry is given a free hand. Strongly as the system is recommended by the government department, there is no compulsion, no stereotyped form. The state is willing to lend all the aid it can, particularly by watching the progress of the system where adopted, and by giving assistance and information where desired ; beyond that nothing at present. The variety of the needs of various industries, the delicate nature of some of their problems, the intricate and close knowledge of the associations on both sides concerning the conditions in the trade, are all recognised, and the state is prepared to leave all to them, trusting in their capacity. The Whitley commissioners recommend frequent and regular meetings of the councils wherever they are set up, for "the object is to secure co-operation by granting to workpeople a greater share in the consideration of matters affecting their industry, and this can only be achieved by keeping employers and workpeople in constant touch." The work of the councils is intended to be much more than the mere settlement of differences as to wages and conditions of work ; it is hoped that it will include many things which are favourable to the interests of both parties, and will assist in the furtherance of the prosperity of the industry ; the latter work may do even more than the former in securing lasting industrial peace. It is suggested that the knowledge of details acquired by the workers in manipulating the processes

of the industry may be made better use of ; suggestions for improved working, and even inventions, may be discussed and applied, with proper safeguards to the rights of the workers in regard to their ideas ; this by conduced to bigger or cheaper production would be to the benefit of all. The views and suggestions of the workpeople in regard to the conditions under which they work may be considered, and the councils may even elect to discuss questions relating to technical education and research. All this is in addition to the work nearer to hand of evolving " regular methods of negotiation for issues arising between employers and workpeople, with a view both to the prevention of differences and their better adjustment when they appear." They would naturally discuss questions of hours of work and rates of wages, including the intricate problems of fixing rates for piece-work and time-work of varying kinds and under varying conditions. In this they would materially assist their trade unions and employers' associations. They would not, as some have feared, supersede the trade unions, because the representatives of labour, being appointed by the unions, would be responsible to them and could not bind them without their approval. The whole power of the labour representatives, in fact, would rest on the support of the unions behind them, answerable to the whole of the workpeople, and still holding the ultimate weapon of the strike. Joint councils are not intended to supersede, but to supplement, existing organisations.

It is certain that many of the ideals placed before industrial councils assume a detailed knowledge of local conditions which would be beyond the scope of a national organisation. The councils are therefore urged to establish themselves as the head of a system of lesser councils.

They should set up first district committees capable of carrying through much of the general business of their locality, and specially adapted to deal with any problems peculiar to their district. Below these there should be a joint committee for every works, factory, mine, and so on, where the employers would meet their own workpeople for the furtherance of a good understanding and for the improvement of the working of their own particular undertaking. "It is not enough to secure co-operation at the centre, between the national organisations ; it is equally necessary to enlist the activity and support of employers and employed in the districts and in individual establishments." The establishment of such subsidiary bodies places on the national council the duty of co-ordinating action by promulgating general guiding principles, and also of so far defining the spheres of action of the various subsidiary bodies as to avoid overlapping ; for example, general national arrangements as to wages made for the whole industry on the recommendation of the national organisation should never be set aside for a particular area by a contrary resolution of a district council.

In such a hierarchy the works committees have opportunities of a very important character in spite of their place as the smallest and lowest grade in the system. Their ability to help in practical details of the actual work of the industry while the bigger bodies must confine their attention to broader matters of policy, will give them a special individuality among industrial councils. "In every industry there are certain questions, such as rates of wages and hours of work, which should be settled by District or National Agreement, and with any matter so settled, no Works Committee should be allowed to interfere ; but there are also many questions closely affecting

daily life and comfort in, and the success of, the business, and affecting in no small degree efficiency of working, which are peculiar to the individual workshop or factory. The purpose of a Works Committee is to establish and maintain a system of co-operation in all these workshop matters." "We regard the successful development and utilisation of Works Committees in any business . . . as of equal importance with its commercial and scientific efficiency ; and we think that in every case one of the partners or directors, or some other responsible representative of the management, would be well advised to devote a substantial part of his time and thought to the good working and development of such a committee."

While the complete system of councils and committees is recommended for the most highly organised industries, only partial application is suggested for those classified in *Group B*. Some may be found to be so nearly complete in their organisation as to be capable of establishing national councils if, at first at any rate, these councils are carefully guided. It is recommended that information collected by the state on the working of the system generally should be utilised on behalf of these weaker national councils by the appointment of members representing the government department, but not possessed of voting power. In other industries of *Group B* there may be found localities or branches of the trade well organised although the trade as a whole is not ready for a national council. Here the local organisation only could be used, and it is proposed that district committees should be established without a national council, but by their work, influence and experience warranted gradually to prepare the trade, as a whole, for national organisation.

For the totally unorganised trades, classified in

*Group C*, strong state control is necessary, for they are quite incapable of organising on the Whitley system, at present. Those sitting for the unorganised party would have no real power, because they would not be truly representative of their side of the industry, and would be unable to commit it to any decision they might take in the council or committee. A method for dealing with such cases is already familiar in trade boards, and nothing more than an extension of this system is recommended.

There is nothing revolutionary in the scheme of the Whitley commissioners. They propose no fundamental modification in the economic or social organisation of the country ; on the contrary, the scheme assumes the continuance of the capitalistic organisation of industry. Its whole aim is to secure, in the first place, better understanding between Capital and Labour, and in the second place, close and active co-operation for their mutual good. The system continues progress in the direction already taken before the war by arbitration and conciliation and trade boards, availing itself of accumulated experience on both sides and on the part of the state ; seeking to wear away difficulties gradually without any sudden and serious disorganisation of the economic system.

The scheme was published in 1917 in the hope that it might be adopted by a great many industries, and an organisation thereby provided in good time to deal with the problems of peace. Within a year over forty trades had announced that they had set up joint standing industrial councils or were in various stages of the consideration of the proposal, and the movement bids fair to extend to all but those enterprises, such as mining and transport, where the essential importance of the work for the whole community and the great strength of the unions

tempt to experiments, the one towards nationalisation, the other towards labour control of the type of guild-socialism.

This introduces the subject of the political side of Trade Unionism. As the movement grew in strength until it included millions of workers it was inevitable that it should find ideals. The struggle for an extra shilling here and an hour a day less somewhere else broadened into claims for a "living wage" and a reasonable amount of leisure for all workers. These ideas are too wide to be the property of any one industry ; they may assume the shape of a national policy. The trade unions began to obtain a political significance. Their ideals found their way into Parliament. In another sense, they have become of political importance, since it is in the power of such unions as those of the coal miners and the railway workers to disorganise services vital to the whole community ; a strike by one of these unions can no longer be regarded as a trade dispute interesting chiefly employers and workers in a particular sphere of production ; it becomes something approaching a national calamity. The ideals propounded by labour and the responsibility for the industrial prosperity of the country as a whole thus combined to force the state to abandon its policy of non-interference in regard to wages ; in 1912 was passed the Minimum Wages Act, which fixed minimum wages for miners, and this line of parliamentary action has been continued, as in the Corn Production Act. One of the features of Trade Unionism in the twentieth century is its intervention in politics in the interest of labour. "Labour members" were returned to Parliament by the aid of trade union funds, from which their election expenses were paid, and by which, in the days before members of Parliament received a salary from the Treasury, they were maintained while in office : they

were, indeed, Trade Union representatives in Parliament. The practice received a severe blow in 1909, when the Osborne Judgment declared the application of trust funds for political purposes to be illegal, but shortly before the war this judgment was reversed.

A less noticeable, because less militant, attempt than Trade Unionism to solve the problem of the antagonism between Capital and Labour has been made by the adoption of methods of co-operation and profit-sharing. Though never likely to become of first-rate importance in the final solution of labour problems—if ever there be one—the movement has grown sufficiently to demand attention. The forms taken by co-operative and profit-sharing undertakings are various ; at one end of the scale is the ordinary firm controlling most of the capital and giving its employees a percentage of the profits of the business in addition to their regular wages, either in cash or as shares in the business ; at the other is the enterprise carried on entirely by capital subscribed by workmen. Of the latter form it must be remembered that the capital of a modern manufactory is usually much larger than could be supplied by its own workmen, so that financial support has to be obtained from a trade union, or from a co-operative trading society, which at the same time serves as customer for the goods produced by the undertaking so assisted.

The experience of a century has done much towards solving the “labour problem.” Powerful organisations and well-defined lines of action have been evolved, and at the same time a more complete understanding between the sides has grown up. The employers are learning to realise the force of the demand of the workers for a high standard of life, and the more enlightened of the workmen know that credit is due to the capitalists for the development

and progress of the great enterprises which can employ so many of them. In place of the old jargon about a wages-fund and the impossibility of improving conditions and wages because the cost was more than industry could bear—an argument to which the lie was given very early by the practical demonstration of Robert Owen, whose factory at New Lanark threw on conditions far above the average of his day—there has come the proof that, within reasonable limits, shorter hours and better pay, (which means better nourishment) are more than balanced by the increased efficiency of the workers. The fostering of good understanding between Capital and Labour by joint councils is one of the principal proposals, and perhaps the greatest hope, for industrial peace in the future. It is but the extension of the method of conciliation to which the advances of the nineteenth century had led us before the war. On the other hand, the growth of trade unions has to some extent put vital industries at the mercy of the men employed in them, and at the same time, with the increasing representation of Labour in government, the idea of the interest and responsibility of the state for its whole economic life is getting a firmer hold on the public imagination. There are therefore, side by side with advocates of a better understanding between the employers and the employed, other prophets who look for a final solution in the national control of industry. Neither is completely satisfactory. In some cases nationalisation is possible ; it may even be desirable ; in others it is at present impracticable. At the same time a system of industrial councils may be successful where the more drastic remedy cannot be applied ; in any case, it is not incompatible with ultimate nationalisation. Both conceptions have their roots in the past.

## CHAPTER IX

### POVERTY AND UNEMPLOYMENT

No one would now challenge the statement that the state should be responsible for the relief of the poor, but public action has not always been guided by this principle. Down to the latter part of the Tudor period the assistance of the needy was rather an act of Christian charity than a public duty, and the poor sought help not from the state, but at the gates of the monasteries and the wealthier lay-folk. It is more than doubtful whether this system, much as its kindness may commend it, could have dealt effectively with the more complex problems of poverty in an age of industrial change, market fluctuation, and dense population, but its opportunities were crushed once and for all by the dissolution of the religious houses during the Reformation. The subsequent distress called for a secular system to replace the ecclesiastical. The outcome was the Poor Law of Elizabeth, inaugurating the system of relief by the parish and the principle of "settlement," according to which a subject could claim relief only in the parish in which he was "settled" by birth or residence, and creating a new set of officials, the overseers of the poor. It laid down lines of policy which were to last for centuries, and it recognised the relief of the poor as a state function, a responsibility which the state has discharged ever since with varying efficiency. The social changes which have occurred have strengthened rather than weakened the need for and the rightness of state intervention to assist

its subjects in a situation more often their misfortune than their fault. The poverty of the wastrel is certainly culpable, and the man unemployed or unemployable on account of bad habits or crime cannot grumble if he meets with little sympathy ; but it is far from correct to assume that all destitute persons, or even a large proportion of them, have themselves alone to thank for their condition. Neither is it true that the condition of poverty is always chronic in the individual. That may be the case with the physically impotent and the mentally unsound, but many are reduced from comparative prosperity to want by broad economic changes over which not only can they have no control, but to whose effects they may be only temporarily subjected. The introduction of machinery in a manufacturing process, for instance, may displace workers, either, as so often in the last century and a half, because one machine does the work of many men with little attention, or, as in the twentieth-century example of motor-traction, because it requires training of a character totally different from that required in the method displaced. Machinery may therefore deprive many workers of a livelihood, but the best of them will soon learn other ways of earning—they may even get abreast of the new methods in their own trade, just as the London cabmen blossomed out in a very short time as automobile drivers. Or again, the displacement by machinery may be only temporary, because the new processes may make possible such an expansion of the industry as to re-absorb the old number of workers even on the machine basis ; this is broadly true of the whole movement of the Industrial Revolution. Of shorter duration, but often as severe while they last, are periods of unemployment due to fluctuations in trade. So far as these can be foreseen, as in the case of seasonal

trades, they are usually provided against, either by earnings during the busy times sufficient to carry the workers over the slack intervals, or by the workers engaging in a second kind of employment which they practise when their principal trade is quiet. More serious are those totally irregular fluctuations which are connected with depressions in trade. Such depressions may arise from many sources. A scarcity of absolute necessities causing a rise in their price is sure to depress the trade in goods less necessary, so that some engaged in the productory or exchange of the latter are unemployed or not fully employed. This is most true of all of a scarcity of essential foodstuffs, and is the basis of Jevons' famous and original suggestion that there might be a connection between the recurrence of both sun-spots and severe trade depressions at (roughly) decennial intervals. One of the characteristics of modern industry and commerce is the close inter-relation of its branches. Industries are much dependent on one another for implements and raw materials, and with modern means of communication depressions and prosperity alike in any part of the world tend to generate a sympathetic movement in other parts. Such causes of unemployment are not removable by the knowledge and skill in economic administration so far gained by the world, but they are very often indeed temporary. To the genuine victim of such causes the state must own a responsibility. It is indisputably a disgrace to a country, prosperous in the main, to have in its midst neglected destitution. Modern thought extends that responsibility to cases above the line of absolute destitution, where there is enough employment for partial self-support, but where aid is needed to ameliorate serious privation. Unemployment and poverty are in a great

measure, therefore, social problems—state problems. Poverty, moreover, is not solely a labour problem, since work is not an essential prelude to pauperism. However far aloof the state may have held from time to time from the labour problem on doctrinaire grounds, it has never, in this country, disclaimed its responsibility for the poor. Men have come to feel, too, that, while state aid should be given where honestly needed, it should never be given in any form or manner which would stigmatise the recipient, or handicap him in reputation or self-respect in the effort to re-establish his independence, an effort which may otherwise so often be successful.

Between the conception of such an ideal of state responsibility and its execution there is a great stumbling-block : state aid given unnecessarily or too abundantly is not only an injustice to the taxpayer whose contributions are in part so employed, but it has a definitely demoralising effect on the recipients, and a bad influence on men who have hitherto been self-supporting workers. Present-day ideas on the methods of treating pauperism are a reaction—a justifiable reaction—from the stringency of the principles which have governed Poor Law administration since 1834, but it must never be forgotten that those principles were evolved to avoid that very same danger of demoralisation, and that they were evolved at a time when the existence of the danger had been demonstrated to the last degree in the practise of the preceding half-century.

The faults which called for the investigations of the Royal Commission of 1832 were due partly to administrative inefficiency and corruption, and partly to the granting of relief on too lavish a scale. The Poor Law retained the form established in Elizabethan times, but the economic conditions of the late seventeenth century,

which included the transition of industry to machine methods and capitalistic management, as well as agricultural changes and wars, had increased unemployment, and the Poor Law system failed entirely to meet the calls made on it. The overseers were often concerned more to prevent people becoming chargeable to their parish than to relieve those in distress. They neglected the poor-houses, which were often farmed out to unscrupulous private enterprise; in these institutions all ages, both sexes, the healthy, the weak, and the physically defective, honest poverty and idle lawlessness dwelt in the same rooms. Another evil, the disposal of children to factory owners under the mask of Poor Law apprenticeship has been referred to in another chapter. Naturally the Commissioners advocated new authorities, reformed workhouses, and strict administration of the poor law. Their recommendations were met by the establishment of Boards of Guardians, charged with the sole duty of Poor Law Administration in their respective parishes or unions of parishes.

The second evil brought to judgment by the Commission of 1832 was that of ill-considered and unnecessary relief. The most popular system, that which was established in Berkshire in 1795, was to fix a standard of wages according to a sliding scale moving with the price of bread, and to make up all wages to that level from the rates. This was a direct encouragement to idleness, since, however little a man chose to earn, he could rely on the deficiencies of his income being made up from public funds. "An industrious fellow," wrote a contemporary observer, "who heretofore has earned his fourteen shillings per week, will now only earn the price of day labour (nine shillings); nor will I blame him, for extraordinary

exertions should have extraordinary reward ; nor can a man be expected to work over-hours for the relief of the poor-rates. Another effect is that those who work none, receive as much as those who do." Whatever condemnation they deserved on moral grounds there can be nothing but praise for the business capacity of the two wives of Eastbourne, of whom it is recorded that they complained of the "conduct of their husbands in refusing to better their condition by becoming paupers." There is no wonder that the rate of increase in the amount of money raised for poor relief was out of all proportion to the growth of population. The lesson of the dangers of promiscuous relief, as learned in the experience of the half-century before the Poor Law of 1834, is never likely to be forgotten, and will probably give an inevitable tinge of harshness to the most beneficent system for the relief of want which the future may have in store.

The line taken in 1834 was a very firm one. Relief in quantity and form was always to be such as to leave the recipient worse off than the independent labourer of his own class, so that a man could no longer gain by throwing himself on the rates. This principle of the Commissioners of 1832 found its legal expression in the new Poor Law of 1834, which laid down the rule of no out-door relief for the able-bodied. The reforms were salutary and effective ; and the Act of 1834 is still, after nearly ninety years, the foundation of English Poor Law Administration. Yet time has shown weaknesses even in a system so ably devised as this. The domination of the workhouse came to be resented. This institution ceased to be the single home of a collection of all sorts and conditions of destitute men, women, and children ; the sexes and the children were separated, but while this reform went far enough to

break up the unity of families, it still left bad men and good men, bad women and good women, together. Over the workhouse, too, hung the disgrace of pauperism, so often entirely unmerited. Neither was the administration always effective, in spite of central control more minute than in most branches of government. The duties of guardians were too narrow in scope, and called for too little initiative to attract the best type of administrative talent to membership of the boards, and the airing of more than one scandal a few years ago finally destroyed confidence in them. In 1905 a Royal Commission was once more issued for the investigation of Poor Law problems. Two reports resulted in the year 1909, but while the proposals of the majority report are rapidly being forgotten, those of the minority, known as the "Break-up of the Poor Law," are still urged on Parliament from many sides as a desirable step in the legislation of the new peace time.

The central idea of the minority report is that, since most of the duties of Poor Law authorities have close parallels in the work of other more efficient public authorities, those duties should be dispersed among the authorities most fitted to execute them ; there should no longer be a separate Poor Law authority, or a separate Poor Law system, or general workhouses. The work should pass to authorities which have grown up since the Poor Law of 1834, which have specialised knowledge, a better personnel, a more thorough organisation, and whose interests are wider than that of "dealing with destitute persons, and with them only during the period when they are destitute." Thus the education of Poor Law children would be carried on in the ordinary schools under the control of the local education authorities. Medical treatment would pass to the public health authorities and, in part, to the education

authorities, who already have considerable powers in providing for treatment of defective vision and dentition in school children. The mentally unsound would be under the care of the lunacy authorities. Provision for the aged in some measure anticipated the reports of the Poor Law Commission by the Old Age Pensions Act of 1908. For relief of want due to unemployment some revival and improvement of the system of distress committees established by the Unemployed Workman Act of 1905 is suggested. There would be much more outdoor relief, or relief of persons in their own homes, but by way of safeguards careful investigation by a statutory committee of the District or Borough Council and the granting of a certain proportion of relief in kind (especially in food) instead of in money have been recommended. Here, too, something has already been done in the conferring of powers on local education authorities to provide meals for school children who are not otherwise sufficiently well-fed to be able to reap the benefit of the educational facilities offered them.

But prevention is better than cure. Although a certain amount of poverty is inevitable, so that the reform of Poor Law administration is a very important part of domestic reconstruction, the prevention of poverty so far as possible is equally desirable, striking as it does at the roots of the evil. Much has been done towards this end already. Since so much poverty is due to unemployment, this evil has been attacked in two directions ; first attempts have been made to secure a more perfect organisation of the labour market by bringing would-be employers and would-be workers into closer touch, so that it shall happen as seldom as possible that a man is going about unemployed while there is an opening for his services, just because he does not know where that opening

is. In 1909 the system of Labour Exchanges was established, where those seeking work of any sort were encouraged to register, and to which it was intended that employers should communicate their needs. It is the duty of these exchanges to bring supply and demand, so far as they are given information by both sides, into touch. The success of this new venture was not great at first; efficient organisation of a new department is not obtained by a stroke of the pen, and a workman does not forget quickly that a labour exchange has failed him. Undoubtedly, too, there was prejudice, and again, although the exchanges could not make work where none existed, the odium of unemployment tended to gather round them, and to give them a reputation of inefficiency. Familiarity, coupled with the wider experience in organisation which has accrued to them from the greatly increased duties thrust on them by war and demobilisation, and the aid they should get from the more recently constituted Ministry of Labour, should give them a higher place in public esteem, and a very real and useful efficiency.

If the first step is to reduce the amount of unemployment by organising the labour market, the second is to help the workers to prepare for such unemployment as will come their way (as come their way it still will, since the root causes lie deeper than the labour market, in the organisation of the very economic system of the age). The best solution of this problem may come in time from the revision of the relations of Capital and Labour, for if the earnings of the workers become sufficient, there is no reason why a worker of ordinary foresight and moderate thriftiness should find himself unprepared when faced with a short period of unemployment. Meanwhile, the state has taken definite action of a limited and experi-

mental nature in the system of Unemployment Insurance established in 1911. The scheme was instituted under the control of the Board of Trade and applied to a small number of enumerated trades, the Board having power to extend it to other employments. To the insurance fund employer and workman each contributed  $2\frac{1}{2}d.$  per week ; to the total sum so collected the Treasury added one-third.<sup>1</sup> The benefit accruing to the workman is out-of-work pay for a fixed number of weeks in the year when he is genuinely unable to secure employment. This scheme embraces about one and a half million workers.

Unemployment as a result of illness has long been a subject for insurance as a matter of private enterprise, but there were all too many who were content to live without provision for such a contingency, and when trouble came, either to seek public relief, or at least to suffer privations, and to allow their dependents to suffer privations, injurious to their efficiency as healthy and useful members of the state. Many indeed have but a poor margin of earnings left for investment in health insurance. The National Insurance Act of 1911 attacked the problem from both these points of view by making insurance compulsory on all employed manual workers between the age of sixteen years and the age of seventy years (when old-age pensions became receivable) whose earnings were less than £160 a year, and by calling upon the employers to contribute to the fund. Men liable to insurance under the Act paid fourpence per week and women threepence ; the employer contributed threepence per week in every case, and the state twopence.<sup>1</sup> Insurance may be with the state, for which purpose there is created a Joint Committee for the whole Kingdom, whose four

<sup>1</sup> These amounts have been slightly increased since.

constituents are the Health Insurance Commissioners for England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales respectively ; alternatively insurance may be with any ordinary insurance company or with a trade union, provided that these organisations are approved by the state. The benefits to which the workers contributing are entitled consist of payments during sickness and disablement, together with medical attention, which in cases of tuberculosis may be sanatorium treatment. The Act also initiated a policy of encouraging the maintenance of population and securing better conditions for the health of mothers and infants by providing maternity benefit. By the end of 1917 this scheme affected fifteen million workers. The resources of the system at the same date amounted to £99,000,000, of which £82,000,000 had been contributed by the workers and £17,000,000 by the Treasury.

The phenomenon of a great increase in the supply of labour from a new source (that is to say, not merely by transfer from one trade to another within the community) is sometimes a factor in the problem of unemployment, but it is not characterised by the same universality as most of the causes already enumerated. In new countries it often occurs in the form of excessive immigration or the advent of coloured labour to compete with white. The case of special interest in this country at the present time is that of the change in the industrial position of women. From the economic standpoint the women's problem presents two main questions, that of the effect of the additional supply of labour which they will bring into the market, tending to depress wages both for themselves and for men, and that of the customary inequality of remuneration of men and women, which might lead to men being displaced by women. The mere fact of a larger proportion of the adult female

population of the country entering industry does not necessarily mean a glut in the labour market. Such a development would usually be gradual, and the expansion of industry might be sufficient to absorb the extra labour easily.

It is customary to pay women less than men. This is largely due to the fact that their work is usually less rapid or more restricted in scope. Investigations undertaken into the conditions of the employment of women during the war on work formerly done entirely by men show that the replacement was seldom that of one man by one woman. So far as this is the reason there is no injustice in paying the woman a lower rate, and there is no question of women ousting men from their work by accepting cheaper terms. The feminists recognise this in limiting their demands to "equal pay for equal work." But there are many branches of economic activity in which women have for long been working side by side with men—in much clerical work, in the cotton mills of Lancashire, and in tailoring, for example. Here it is alleged they are often paid less than the men, and the fundamental reason for this seems to be that the majority of the men are responsible for the maintenance of a family, and the majority of the women are not. It is therefore likely to be the case that female labour will be offered at a lower rate than male, with the inevitable result that any large increase in the number of women in industry would be likely to lead to the unemployment of men, the resultant distress being passed on to dependent women and children. The question is not purely economic; it is social; it has brought forward suggestions for state aid to families which strike deep into the problem of the moral responsibility of the father for the home; it brings to the front the inquiry whether the individual or the family is to be the basis of social order.

## CHAPTER X

### IMPERIAL EXPANSION

THE essay of Lord Bacon *Of Plantations*, only a few paragraphs in length, is an important treatise on the origins of our colonial possessions. It is concerned with the trading settlement, and the trading settlement of the Tudor period was the embryo from which the British Empire of to-day has evolved. For long the government department charged with the control of colonial affairs was known as the Board of Trade and Plantations. Not only were the affairs of the colonies not entrusted to a separate office ; they were regarded as an appendage to matters of trade. The original English colonist was a bit of an explorer, a bit of a seafarer, a bit of a merchant ; but it was the last capacity that was the most important. To trading enterprises are due our first American and West Indian colonies and, by the enterprise of the East India Company, our first footing in India and the Malay Peninsula.

The second great motive power productive of the establishment of colonies was religion, which in the seventeenth century drove Protestant dissenters and Romanist recusants across the Atlantic to seek a new England there. Thither also went later dispossessed royalists to form the Carolinas. In the eighteenth century, apart from the voyages of Captain Cook, which meant the acquisition of an entire new continent as the result of exploration, the main source of colonial expansion was conquest, principally at the expense of France.

In our colonial history, during the period of acquisition mainly by conquest up to 1815, there is a great deal that is glorious and inspiring—the conquest of Canada, the conquest of India, and much else in our military and naval annals. But there was also an admixture that was purely deplorable. First, the series of blunders, due to a fundamentally mistaken conception of the nature of a colony, which led to our loss of the American colonies. The corruption and peculation of East India Company servants in India was matched by the ugly slave-trading enterprises of other overseas' merchants. There was at home a considerable feeling among men of scruple against the proceedings of the traders, with which unhappily colonial enterprise was apt to be popularly associated. Horace Walpole wrote : “ If all the black slaves were in rebellion, I should have no doubt in choosing my side, but I scarce wish perfect freedom to merchants who are the bloodiest of tyrants.” Something of a sordid taint adhered to colonial policy, because the imperial idea, in as far as it had a conscious existence, was mercenary and mechanical. There were those who saw in overseas' dependencies convenient dumping grounds for criminals and outposts for trade ; there were others who regarded them as merely a burden and a nuisance ; there were those to whom they appeared as rather a disgrace. There were few indeed to whom the colonies were a glory and an inspiration.

In the nineteenth, as in the eighteenth, century the empire was increased considerably by conquest ; but the most distinctive feature of its growth, territorially, has been a true expansion of existing settlements. Thus the original settlements on the coast fringe of Australasia spread more and more inland. The heart of Australia

was penetrated by travellers, and more and more of the interior opened up to human exploitation. The significance of the term Canada has been entirely altered. At the opening of the century it denoted the old province taken from the French running east from Lake Superior along the northern bank of the St. Lawrence. To-day it means also the great districts of the North-West, Manitoba, Alberta, Athabasca, and Saskatchewan, and British Columbia. The stations of Penang and Singapore were, under the guidance of Sir Stamford Raffles, used as the nucleus of the Straits Settlements, which include the Malay Peninsula and the Cocos Islands. In Africa the explorations of Livingstone, Stanley, Speke, and others were of first-rate importance in attracting the attention not only of Great Britain but of all Europe to the possibilities of exploiting the "dark" Continent. With Cape Colony as their base, the British pushed northward along both east and west coasts, and in the centre, up towards those regions of the great lakes (Tanganyika, Nyassa, etc.), and river basins (Nile, Orange and Zambesi) that the explorers had opened up. In West Africa a number of disputed possessions, worked by private companies—on the Gold Coast, at Sierra Leone, on the Gambia, were brought together under Crown control. The introduction of steam transport and the other mechanical devices of the century which tended to overcome the great physical obstacles of mere distance profoundly affected all colonial development. Steamship, rail-road and telegraph aided immensely the efforts of colonists to exploit their material resources to the uttermost and to open up fully the territories of which they were in possession.

Of wars—mostly of a minor character—there were plenty. In India the process of absorption of native

powers continued. In 1843 Sir Charles Napier won Sindh with Karachi for the British Crown. There followed two Sikh wars, which resulted in the annexation of the Punjab in 1849. There were wars in Burmah which gave us Assam and Pegu, including Rangoon, the latter in 1852, and Upper Burmah in 1885. There were several wars in China, as the result of which we were confirmed in the complete control of the island and harbour of Hong Kong and the use for British trade of the ports of Canton and Shanghai. Most of all, there were wars in Africa. In 1874 Lord Wolseley took Coomassie in a war against Ashanti. In 1882 the same general by winning the battle of Tel-el-Kebir made Great Britain supreme in Egypt. The system of dual control with France came to an end in 1883. Nominally adviser to the Khedive, Lord Cromer (then Sir Evelyn Baring) became the maker of modern Egypt by his great work of reform and reconstruction and of economic development, especially in the Nile valley and by means of an effective system of irrigation. In 1898, by the battle of Omdurman, Gordon was avenged, Khartoum secured, and British control over the Soudan made good. In South Africa there were wars, first against native tribes—against the Kaffirs (repeatedly), the Zulus, formidable adversaries under Cetawayo, and only finally beaten after some disastrous episodes and with much trouble at Ulundi in 1879, later against the Mashonas and Matabele, finally defeated in 1896—these lands, ruled over by Lobengula, being opened up and administered by Cecil Rhodes and his chartered company—secondly against the Dutch, in the two Boer Wars of 1881 and 1899–1902.

Our relations with the Dutch formed the most difficult problem of British rule in South Africa. When we took

over the Cape of Good Hope in 1806 we took over in it a Dutch population, which, not unnaturally, had no love for the transference of authority from their own race to an alien power, and which had a sturdy love of independence. This need not necessarily in itself have provoked trouble ; but a number of unfortunate circumstances embittered the Boers. Some of the British administrators were far from wise. Their methods may have been excellent ; but they were novel, and they were not appreciated by the Boers. Neither were the British missionaries appreciated, their doctrine of slave emancipation and their attitude towards native races seeming to the hard-headed Dutch farmers to be merely fantastic and unpractical ; while the freeing of their slaves was an economic blow, for which the compensation extended to the Boers was felt by them to be wholly inadequate. The climax came as the result of a Kaffir invasion of Cape Colony in 1834. The invaders were driven back, and their lands in turn invaded ; the eastern boundary of British rule was extended so as to include a portion of Kaffir country to be known as the province of Queen Adelaide. The Colonial Secretary at the time, Lord Glenelg, rescinded this arrangement, regarding it as a gross injustice to a native race. Such philanthropic tergiversation simply bewildered the Dutch ; it seemed mere madness. They decided that they could no longer live under a rule so vacillating, so preposterous, and migrated northwards. The "Great Trek" of 1836 is one of the most outstanding events in the history of British Africa. The Dutch settled on the Orange and Vaal rivers and founded their two republics—the Orange Free State and the Transvaal.

The British sphere of influence tended ever to increase. From 1844 dates the colony of Natal ; in 1868 Basutoland

was taken over ; in 1871, after the discovery of diamond mines in the country round about Kimberley, sovereignty was proclaimed over Griqualand West. The lure had appeared which enticed the British more and more into those parts whither the Boers had migrated. In 1852 the government had acknowledged the independence of the Transvaal republic ; two years later it acknowledged that of the Orange Free State. But in 1876 troubles with native peoples produced a new situation. The Kaffirs had been definitely worsted, and more than the original province of Queen Adelaide had been annexed ; but beyond the Kaffirs lay the Zulus. The menace of Cetawayo was formidable not only to the British power in South Africa, but even more so to the Transvaal republic, then weak and impoverished. Sir Theophilus Shepstone, after investigation of the conditions in the republic, decided on annexation. Three-quarters of the burghers protested. In 1881 they regained their independence at Majuba, to lose it again in 1901. The exploitation of British interests in the mines, which involved the acquisition of a certain political status for the Uitlanders, proved incompatible with Dutch independence.

Commercial enterprises of one sort or another were thrusting the British colonies further and further towards the heart of the continent. The scientific explorer, the teacher, the missionary, penetrated further and further, opening up more and more of the darkness of Central Africa ; while Rhodesia, Nyassaland and in East Africa Zanzibar and Uganda became absorbed.

If it was in Africa that the territorial extension of the British Empire was in the nineteenth century most pronounced, little less significant was the extension in the east—into China where the great port of Wei-hai-wei

was added in 1898 to Hong Kong, and over the Indian and Pacific Oceans, with the taking over of Aden, North Borneo, groups such as the Fijis, the Solomon Islands, the Tongas, and British New Guinea. All this was directly connected with sea-power, for it meant the acquisition of one naval station after another. For the British naval and mercantile fleets there were harbours all over the globe. No less directly was it connected with trade. The trade was not always above suspicion. The beginnings of our penetration into China are inextricably connected with the nefarious opium traffic, the "opium war" of 1840-2, and the very questionable episode of the "*lorcha*," "*Arrow*," which produced the wars of 1856-60. The interdependence of colonial and commercial issues was no less marked in the nineteenth than in the two previous centuries. But this interdependence has produced a different tendency. In the past it had led to a depreciation of the colonial idea; it had the reverse effect in the Victorian era. The enormous increase in the dimension of industry and the volume of trade due to the introduction of steam and electrical power made our colonial possessions a factor of immense importance, both as producers of the raw materials needed for our factories and as markets for the sale of our manufactured goods.

Just as the public became conscious of, and came to take a pride in, their great inventive and industrial triumphs, the mere size of them affecting even the least impressionable mind, so this extraordinary territorial expansion, which added to the British Crown within the century nearly three million square miles, so that the empire covered not far off a fourth part of the world, appealed as an obvious inspiration. The map revealing this potent fact in red colouring, statistics showing the

number of different races and religions over which the Union Jack flew, caused people to think of this ubiquity of the British seamen, traders, colonisers, missionaries, as one of the most glorious achievements of our history. When imperialism became a political creed, as taught by such exponents as Disraeli and Chamberlain, a new touch of imagination and idealism was added, and the British people came to regard themselves as missionary spirits going forth into the remote parts of the earth spreading abroad civilisation and Christianity, introducing among native populations a higher justice, a respect for order and law, utilising European science, executive ability and progressive enterprise to make the fullest use of the lavish gifts of an abundant Nature. It was quite obvious, of course, that not all engaged in colonial undertakings were inspired by the loftiest motives, that many had only the most material aims at heart, and were not always too scrupulous as to the means whereby they were attained. But it might easily be asked, of what great crusaders cannot the same be said ? There are ignoble minds among the most zealous of pilgrims, the most chivalrous of knights-errant. There were among the colonisers the mercenary and the unscrupulous, as there are in all departments of human activity ; but there were also others who with no thought of other reward save the joy of the work itself devoted their lives to the labours of the pioneer, the missionary, the lawgiver ; those who abandoned the comforts of home and civilisation to explore in toil and hardship the waste and the jungle, or to build towns and harbours, roads and railways, where before there had been only wilderness, or with infinite patience to administer equity among people, to whom previously perhaps law had been little more than an amalgam of revenge and super-

stitution. And to all save the most sceptical and hostile there was something fine, healthy, heroic in the impulse to carry the British inheritance of custom and tradition throughout the world, to battle with adverse circumstances; to reclaim desert, marsh and forest for human benefit, to overcome the forces of disorder, incoherence, immobility, to introduce stability and progress.

The renaissance of the colonial or imperial idea after the period of dejection following on the loss of the American colonies dates from the mission of Lord Durham to Canada in 1838. He was sent as Governor-General to deal with the acute friction between English Upper Canada and French Lower Canada, which had come to a head in the armed rising of Papineau in the previous year, and the parallel disturbances in Upper Canada, which had also produced a rising, that of MacKenzie. The hostility to the French methods of government had been exemplified in the unpopularity of the Quebec Act of 1774 among the New England colonists. So when the Loyalists, who clung to their allegiance to the British Crown despite the War of Independence, migrated into Ontario and New Brunswick they found their political ideas in sharp conflict with those of the French Canadians. In Upper Canada there had been a similar conflict between the original loyalist settlers from the United States, who had become extremely exclusive socially and oligarchic politically, and the later and much more numerous immigrants from Great Britain, largely Scotsmen, who naturally wanted to break up the "loyalist" monopoly. Each province had had a nominated Legislative Council, and an elected House of Assembly: but joint political institutions had been impossible. Yet it was precisely the expedient of joint institutions that was recommended in the famous

Lord Durham Report as a solvent for the Canadian problem. One of the most serious defects of the system in Canada was that the legislature had no control over the executive, that there was a constitution in name but not in reality, since representative assemblies have little value unless they possess effective control over policy. The report, work of Edmund Gibbon Wakefield and Charles Buller, marks one of the most important—perhaps the most important—turning point in our imperial history. On it was founded the Union Act of 1840 and the North America Act of 1867, the establishment of the Dominion of Canada, the union together of all the provinces of North America.<sup>1</sup> On its principles have been founded the Commonwealth of Australia, the Dominion of New Zealand, the Union of South Africa. It is the charter of the system of the self-governing dependency ; it provided the solution of the two initial problems of British imperialism—the relations of colonists one with another, their internal constitutional organisation, and their relations with the mother country. There are two distinctive features of the British Empire—the self-governing dependency, on the one hand, and the status of native populations on the other.

The self-governing dominion consists, broadly speaking,—this of course is not true of Eastern Canada or certain parts of South Africa—of colonies proper, plantations, not conquests, and they are mostly peopled by an English-speaking population ; and in these dominions the traditional political ideals and principles of England are enshrined in the independence of a federal system. The system is not identical in all these cases. While the North America Act of 1867 and the Union of South Africa Act of 1909 conferred definite powers on each province

<sup>1</sup> Except Newfoundland.

severally, thereby by implication leaving all other powers not expressly designated to the central government of the Dominion and the Union respectively; by the Australian Commonwealth Act of 1900 the specific powers are conferred on the Commonwealth government, so that all the powers not stated are reserved to the constituent states. That is, the central authority is, as far as the letter of the constitution goes, stronger in Canada and South Africa than in Australia. To use the apt German phrase, the former are instances of the *Bundesstaat*, the latter of the *Staatenbund*. Thus the statutes passed by the separate provincial legislatures of South Africa and Canada require the sanction of the Union and the Dominion governments respectively, whereas the individual state in Australia does not need to obtain any such sanction from the Commonwealth government.

As regards the relations between the dominions and the mother country the representative assemblies have almost unfettered freedom. They may carry out a perfectly independent policy, not merely conforming to the wishes of the mother country. They can be protectionist, while her tariff system is free-trade. Their governors are expected to follow the advice of the colonial Cabinets acting on the analogy of the constitutional monarchy and the party system in England. They have control of their own armed forces, maintenance and equipment, though on the outbreak of war their direction passes automatically to Whitehall. Each Dominion has a representative in London, equivalent to an ambassador—an agent-general or a high-commissioner. Assent to colonial legislation has to be obtained from the Crown; but this is seldom more than a formality; and, although by the Colonial Laws Validity Act of 1865 it is laid down

that any colonial Bill conflicting with the provisions of an act passed by the imperial Parliament, intended to apply to that colony, is thereby void ; as a matter of fact, this is not a very important qualification, as little legislation of the Imperial Parliament ever is made to apply to the colonies. The exceptions are Bills relating to such matters as merchant shipping, aliens, copyright. Even so the Copyright Act of 1911 was simply left optional, so far as the colonies were concerned. A certain amount of central control over the colonies is exercised by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, which is the court of appeal from all colonial and Indian courts. But, although this may be corrected, there has been a tendency latterly on the part of some of the self-governing colonies rather to resent this authority and an unwillingness to submit cases to the Judicial Committee.

There is no more signal expression of the political genius of the British race than this device of the self-governing dominion. The policy which has produced it is the very antithesis of that which led to the rupture with the American colonies. It is a far cry indeed from the colonial conception of the Navigation Laws to that of the colonial federation. Instead of a narrow legal mechanical interpretation of the relations between the mother country and her offspring, one that is liberal, idealist, comprehensive ; instead of a selfish system of restriction for material objects, one of the utmost liberty and confidence, based upon a belief in the essential brotherhood of the Anglo-Saxon race. Not dependence, but equality ; not obedience, but alliance, are the characteristic features of the great communion of the English-speaking people within the British Empire.

This spirit of equality and alliance has found expression

in the practice of arranging periodical conferences of delegates from the self-governing colonies and the mother country. A first attempt, representing all kinds of dependencies, was made in 1887, and ten years later the first Colonial Conference of representatives of the self-governing dominions and the mother country was held, attended only by prime ministers. At the conference of 1902 the same communities were represented, but by more ministers, while the meeting of 1907 made definite rules for future conferences. The prime ministers of Great Britain and the self-governing dominions, with the Secretary of State for the Colonies, are *ex-officio* members, and meetings are to be arranged every four years. The meetings become *Imperial* Conferences. Such a meeting was held in 1911. The war made consultation with the colonies a frequent necessity, and the conference of 1915 was accompanied by the entirely new step of admitting a colonial prime minister to a sitting of the Imperial Cabinet, an experiment since repeated and extended. The subjects dealt with by the conference have included the position of the colonies in regard to commercial and political treaties made by the mother country, Imperial defence, Imperial and inter-colonial taxation, and Imperial federation. In all these matters there have been definite results favourable to the unity and prosperity of the empire as a whole.

The second characteristic feature of the British Empire has been the treatment of native races. Broadly speaking, it may be said that our policy in this connection has been one of emancipation, tempered by prudence. There was no enthusiast's suggestion that Hindus, Hottentots, were the full equals of the Europeans who settled among them, fully competent to manage their own affairs.

It was accepted as a postulate that they were, in greater or less degree, deficient in political capacity, that they needed help, guidance, supervision, education—especially political education. On the other hand, it was also postulated that oppression was altogether taboo, severity of treatment was to be deprecated except in cases of emergency, revenue raised in the country must be used for the country, native laws, customs, and religions were to be respected so long as they did not clash with British conceptions of right and justice. Thus, while suttee was proscribed and the excesses of the dervishes combated, Dutch common law is maintained in South Africa, Hindu and Mohammedan laws of inheritance hold good in their respective communities in India, the law of Cyprus is Ottoman and a Fijian regulation board orders the conduct of Fijians subject to the assent of the Legislative Council. The British administrator of these lands of alien race is not protected by *droit administratif*; but is responsible alike for offences committed in his private and his public capacity. Thus the Indian civil servant can be sued both in the Indian High Court and in the English courts on his return home. Moreover, there is a special list of misdemeanours for officials, such as being engaged in any trade in India—as a safeguard against such corruption as disgraced the East India Company. As regards education, while nothing has been done to interfere with native instruction, this has been supplemented by the institution of schools and universities worked on an English model, and the universities at home have been open to the native student. Of late years there has been a strong movement towards giving the native races, both in India and in Egypt, an increasing share in their own government. The path of this movement has not been any too easy. The

arguments of the sceptics has seemed to be reinforced by the outbreaks of sedition, which have in some cases undoubtedly been encouraged, sometimes actually originated, by those who have had the advantages of European education, and who have profited by them to undermine European influence. Probably the path of future progress, as presaged by present legislation, in this direction will be difficult, and it will certainly not be short. Such progress is bound to be difficult. But with these provisos it may be accepted that the path is the right one to take, and that in limited native self-government lies the solution of the third of the great problems of the British imperial system.

The system of Indian government instituted with the supersession of the East India Company after the Mutiny invested the powers of the old Board of Control in a Secretary of State for India, assisted by a Council—the Council of India, the members of which are recruited from ex-Indian officials of outstanding knowledge and experience. But so vast a country cannot be ruled entirely from Whitehall, and much direct authority has to be exercised by the Viceroy or Governor-General, whose seat of office is now not Calcutta, but Delhi, the ancient capital of the Moguls. He is assisted by an Executive Council consisting of five or six members, and although the Viceroy has a certain freedom of independent action, the executive authority is usually that of the "Governor-General of India in Council." There is also a Legislative Council, which until recently was little more than the Executive Council under another name and performing a different function; but since Lord Morley's Indian Councils Act of 1909, which was supplemented by the Government of India Act of 1915 and the amending Act of 1916, it came

to consist of sixty-eight members, these being the Viceroy himself, the Commander-in-Chief as an extraordinary member, the six members of the Executive Council, and twenty-eight official, five non-official nominated members, and, finally, twenty-seven elected by districts or by bodies representing important interests. There are two principles involved in this arrangement—first, the introduction of the native into legislation ; secondly, the introduction of the Elective system suggesting that possibly the Legislative Council might in course of time develop into a truly representative assembly. It is only a legislative assembly, it should be remembered ; it has no other parliamentary powers, and cannot without the express permission of the Viceroy discuss military and religious matters, or revenue, or foreign affairs.

Analogous to the central executive and legislative system for India were the systems for its major component provinces. Bengal, Madras, or Bombay had each a governor, each an executive council, each a Legislative Council, consisting of fifty members, and appointed in the same way as those of the central Legislative Council. Legislation passed in these Councils required the sanction of the Viceroy as well as of the provincial governor, and if they conflicted with any provisions of an act by the Central Council they were as invalid as if they conflicted with an act of the Imperial Parliament relating to India. In the lesser provinces of Behar-Orissa, Agra-Oudh, the Punjab, Burmah, there is a Lieutenant-Governor and a legislative assembly consisting of from thirty to fifty members, who may be either nominated or elected under arrangements made by the Governor-General in Council ; at least one-third of the members being non-official. In the Central and North-West provinces, Delhi, Coorg,

Assam, Baluchistan, etc., authority is vested in Chief Commissioners and Legislative Councils of thirty, nominated or representative.<sup>1</sup>

Thus in all the Indian provinces directly under British sovereignty there was established native participation in legislation, and the representative principle is either in force or contemplated. But there are large tracts of India not under direct British rule at all. There are the feudatory states, not fewer than six hundred in number, and including Hyderabad, Baroda, Mysore, Cashmir, Gwalior, Travancore. These are governed by their native rulers, the precise relations of each to the British Government being regulated by treaty. Generally speaking, the stipulations are that the native states do not enter into direct relation with any foreign power, that their armies are limited in size, while in time of war they are expected to assist the Indian Government with armed force, and that they accept the general advice of a Resident—a British official at the native court maintaining connection with the British government of India. Similar in having a British Resident, but unlike in that they owe no allegiance to the British Empire, are Afghanistan and Nepal.

Egypt is also a protectorate. Since December, 1914, when the Turkish suzerainty was declared at an end, the Khedivial power has been in the hands of Hussein Kamel, a descendant of Mehemet Ali, founder of Egyptian independence. Our Consul-General has become a High Commissioner, acting as the representative of the British Government under direction not of the Colonial but of the Foreign Office. Extensive judicial reforms have been carried out with a view to obtaining a uniform system for native and European; and we have also encouraged an

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 221.

important and far-reaching system of local self-government. The Sudan, under the joint sovereignty of Great Britain and Egypt, exercised through a Governor-General, stands apart from Egypt. Other protectorates are those over Nigeria, Nyassaland, British East Africa, Uganda, Somaliland, and the Western Pacific. They are under the authority of High Commissioners or Commissioners, the Western Pacific coming directly under the Colonial Office, the African group under the Union of South Africa. There are two other types of tenure whereby we hold lands among native races. There are a few chartered companies still remaining, for example in Rhodesia, with administrators who have to be approved of the Colonial Office ; and there are "spheres of influence" on the outer edges of our colonies proper sometimes in which we do not exercise a well-defined authority, but exclude the influence of foreign powers, and give advice to the native ruler through a resident at his court. Such vague authority is always liable to develop into something more important.

The last type of colony in the British Empire—coming midway between the great self-governing dominions and those in which the native problem is uppermost—is that of the Crown Colony. Crown Colonies come directly under the authority of the "Colonial Office" as Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa do not, and their resident governors are real rulers, not bound to accept the advice of colonial cabinets. The difference in treatment is due to a difference in origin, these colonies having, as a rule, come to us by conquest from a foreign power and being often populated by an alien race. But they have not been "kept under," their interests subordinated to British interests, and they have been allowed to retain, as a rule, the customs they possessed prior to their

incorporation in the British Empire. They may be grouped as follows: There are, first, those which have a representative legislature, consisting of one or two chambers, wholly elective as in the Bahamas, Bermudas and Barbados, or partly elective, partly nominated, as in British Guiana, Jamaica, Ceylon, and several others; secondly, those having legislatures consisting entirely of Crown nominees, such as Sierra Leone, Trinidad, British Honduras, etc.; thirdly, those autocratically governed for military reasons—as Gibraltar, St. Helena, Aden, Wei-hai-wei, and Ashanti.

This brief outline of the different methods by which the colonies are governed is sufficient to show the diversity of treatment. No attempt has been made to secure a beautiful uniformity of pattern, symmetry of form, to conform all to one model—an ideally best. Each has been treated in accordance with its specific character—its origin and history, the nature of its population. An almost infinite diversity is characteristic of the empire in all manner of ways. There is no homogeneity in its climates, its races, its religions, its customs. No attempt has been made to produce an artificial homogeneity constitutionally. This is entirely as it should be. It is only a narrow and pedantic mind that seeks to reduce living variety to a dead sameness of pattern, however admirable the pattern may be. Elasticity is achieved by the British method of colonial government—a capacity to respond to change and so to progress in accordance with the varying needs and capacities of the colonies. If the Englishman has been glad to institute English laws and introduce English methods generally into the colonies, he has not sought to do so to the extinction of existing and distinctive custom, he has preserved it. To introduce

civilisation, if it was wanting, to maintain and improve it, if it already existed, has been his aim—not to implant an inflexible *Kultur*, after the German manner.

It is a method of tolerance, a method of wisdom, and of safety. It is also liberal, because in each case is suggested as the ultimate goal the system of self-government as the end to be achieved, whenever a community has revealed itself as capable of exercising it ; the federation of the self-governing dominions being the highest political organisation the British race has been able to develop, the most distinctive feature of the British Empire. Lastly, the marked diversity in the British Empire is the best safeguard of its unity. Uniformity seldom means unity. Unity is not a matter of outward form, but of an inward spirit—a sentiment. The lack of external similarity, the absence of an effort to produce artificial resemblance, is proof of the recognition, which has but seldom been found in history, that in that direction lies not strength, but weakness. It is the recognition that the interests of Cape Colony and New Zealand are different, not an attempt to make them the same, that holds them together. The British Empire has come into being in ways as far as possible from those that created the German Empire. Natural growth, not political force, has been the means of our imperial expansion.

The word Empire is really an unfortunate title for the hegemony of which the United Kingdom and Ireland are the centre. It suggests to many the dictator, the army, conquest, rule by might, repression, vain-glory, arrogance, ostentation. The history of the world's empires has been too much that of a conqueror's selfish lust for temporal power. But it is difficult to find any efficient substitute for the term in order to describe the hegemony,

owing to its essential diversity. But with considerable appropriateness it has been called a League of Nations. Between the mother country and the great dominions the relationship tends ever to be more and more one of a league, an alliance, a partnership. The part that colonial troops played in the South African War revealed the colonies not as servants, but as fellow-workers. The part that they have played in the Great War has been much more momentous. The challenge of Kaiserism was instantly recognised as a challenge to all that the English-speaking race holds most dear—that common possession of traditions and ideals which is the true foundation of our union. The war has now added a host of new and glorious traditions of common perils and sufferings, joint endeavours and common heroism, of fellowship in thought and action. The future must have great developments in store for us. Very significant have been the consultations with Colonial Premiers in the Imperial Cabinet, as instituted in 1917, and the declaration of colonial statesmen that the colonies must have a say in shaping the foreign policy of the empire, and Sir Robert Borden's enunciation of the principle of "equality of nationhood" within it. The colonial conference of the future may well come to be no mere meeting for general discussion, but invested with important executive functions. Some day we may have a true Imperial Parliament—not one merely so in name, as the British Parliament at Westminster to-day, but one in which representation from the mother country and the different colonies sit together; soon we may have a true imperial cabinet with the ministers of mother country and dominion in conclave together shaping a common imperial policy. We must look forward to the inevitable day when the population

and the natural resources of the vast tracts of Canada and Australia will far surpass those of the British Isles ; and, even as Rome humbled herself and ceased even to be capital, yet remained the mother of all western Christendom, so may our islands have to sacrifice themselves, while remaining the beneficent mother of the League of the Free Nations of the English-speaking race.

A very important step towards economic co-operation within the empire, for the thorough exploitation of all its natural resources was taken by a commission, appointed in 1912 on the recommendation of the Imperial Conference. The Commission stated that in all save a very few commodities the empire could be self-supporting. In respect to agriculture, the report of the Commission, which was presented in 1917, found that the empire "could meet not only its own needs but those of friendly neighbouring countries." Before the war the empire supplied the demands of the entire world for a number of important commodities, including nickel and asbestos from Canada, mica from Canada and India, jute from India, diamonds and ostrich feathers from South Africa, while the Eastern possessions produced most of the world's supply of plantation rubber, the West Indies of palm-nuts. Thus not only could the empire be self-sufficing in agricultural produce, raw wool, zinc, and some other commodities, but it has a world monopoly of certain other commodities, while it supplies a large proportion of the world's gold, its fisheries, its timber, while there should be added in a list of its economic assets the immense water-power of Canada.

Accepting without question the desirability of imperial economic independence, the commission, in a spirit reminiscent of the Stuart period, recommended the

attraction of the Dominions' surplus supplies to the United Kingdom "by the establishment of better harbours on the empire trade-routes, and, concurrently, by the existence of improved and cheaper shipping facilities." In other words, we have the principle enunciated of the Mercantile System without the Navigation Acts—attraction instead of compulsion.

The commission also proposed a more minute research into the resources of the empire than they had been able to make, especially as regards commodities for which we rely on foreign production, as to the possibility of discovering or developing sources within the empire of the same articles or finding efficient substitutes. "It is vital," says the report, "that the Empire should, as far as possible, be placed in a position which would enable it to resist any pressure which a foreign Power or Group of Powers could exercise in time of peace or of war in virtue of a control of raw materials and commodities essential" to its well-being.

In the next place the commission made certain suggestions as to the distribution of population within the empire. With a view to securing the right type of settlers in the colonies, they advised control of the business side of emigration at home. For the selection of emigrants, for encouraging them to migrate to the most suitable places, and for the better supervision of passage brokers, a strong central authority was recommended for the United Kingdom to work in co-operation with colonial immigration departments. A larger proportion of women emigrants is desired, particularly in country districts, the tendency being particularly strong for women to stop in the towns.

The next series of proposals of the commission relate

to imperial communications, and especially deal with the great problem of harbour accommodation. As very great saving can be effected, in carriage of goods by sea if very large vessels are used, adequate accommodation for leviathans of ever-increasing dimensions is necessary. This involves the expensive operations of deepening approaches to harbours, few being deep enough in their natural state for the largest ships, and providing sufficient basins, docks, cranes, and storage room. Other things being equal, shipping will be attracted wherever exceptional docking facilities exist. As private enterprise can very seldom profitably undertake such costly enterprises, the commission strongly urge the provision of a number of magnificent ports by aid of state funds as one of the surest means of developing imperial trade, securing that the empire shall have first call on imperial products, and so become to the utmost self-sufficing. Here, again, we have the principle of the Mercantile System with the substitution of encouragement for compulsion.

The last series of proposals relate to commercial practice. Trade intelligence should be officially disseminated, and more ample and better digested statistics collected. Legislation for patents, trade-marks, and companies should be unified, and inter-Imperial exhibitions promoted. Some of the recommendations of the commission have already been put into practice. The Imperial Conference of 1918 had the report before it, and one immediate outcome was the constitution of the Imperial Mineral Resources Bureau, for research into the mineral resources of the empire and the promotion of their development. When we add to these suggestions the fact of the government's adoption of the principle of imperial preference—though the first preferences are

small in scope—it is obvious that the war has produced a great change in feeling with regard to the economic relations of the empire. There could be no more outstanding exemplification of the completeness of the *volte-face* from the principle of non-interference in the sphere of economic and also of colonial policy.

NOTE—The system of Indian government outlined in the text will be considerably altered, when the Government of India Act of 1919 comes into force, by the further participation of the natives in legislation, both in the central and provincial governments, and by the greater independence of the latter.

## CHAPTER XI

### OUR COMMERCIAL FOREIGN POLICY

MODERN methods of transport have drawn all parts of the world very close together both for co-operation and competition. Under these conditions it has been the lot of most civilised countries to develop their "great industry," to carry out their industrial revolutions. The century of the steamship and the steam engine has also been the century of a growth of national feeling. In Europe, Greece found her independence, and Italy and Germany ceased to be collections of small states actuated more by mutual jealousies than by any idea of co-operation, while France, revolutionised, had the strongest of all national feeling and the clearest of national ideals. Across the Atlantic the revolted Colonies had established themselves as a nation, the United States of America, with the constitution of 1787. Inevitably there followed a development of ideas for internal prosperity as well as for foreign relationships. As these nationalities consolidated, as they strove to develop their internal resources, and their economic as well as their political independence, the increasing adequacy of transport was bringing them nearer to one another industrially and, above all, nearer to us, so that our superiority in production threatened their very beginnings ; to this consideration the development of new food supplies by steam transport added that of agricultural self-sufficiency. It is not surprising, therefore,

that the nineteenth century was in the main an era of Protection, or that Great Britain, with a long start in economic development, should stand apart from the rest of the world in the matter of commercial policy. From our initial Protectionist position we gradually departed until we became the champions of Free Trade. Enthusiasm for freedom of trade did, indeed, infect the whole of Europe during the sixties and seventies, but while everywhere else it was followed by a strong reaction, we held on till the end in the practice of Free Trade. Not until the closing years of the century was there ever any organised feeling in favour of a return to state interference in commerce.

Control by the state of foreign trade is almost as old as foreign trade itself, and it appears from the first in two forms, one the direct control of traffic in one or more classes of merchandise, either by regulations as to the direction the trade may take, or by limiting or prohibiting import or export, the other by the imposition of customs duties on imports or exports. The simplest purpose of such control is the raising of revenue, to which only the method of taxation is applicable. The more important purpose from the point of view of this chapter is control of trade in the national interest, either economic in the fostering of agriculture, industry, or commerce, or political when the aim is one of self-sufficiency and defensive resources. The great export of English raw wool to the Flemish weavers was early made a source of revenue for the French wars by means of an export duty, while in Tudor times the careful restrictions on the export of corn, only allowed when there was an excess, remind us that control of commerce can be in the direct interest of the consumer, though nowadays the interest of the

consumer, so far from being a plea for control, has become one of the strongest arguments against any control—the policy of plenty ; free trade. One of the earliest examples of interference on behalf of industry is of a similar character, namely, the control of the export of raw wool to ensure ample and cheap supplies for our own growing cloth manufacture under Edward III. It is noticeable that early tariffs were so often in restraint of export ; tariffs are more often, in the present age, levied on imports, but a reminder that the export trade can be included in a Protectionist scheme is salutary. Its revival has been recently suggested as a means of ensuring the reservation of sufficient supplies for the Empire's needs of the Empire's production of tungsten.

But it was with the opening of the modern age, arising out of the discovery of new worlds and bringing with it trade on a world-wide scale and the possession by the greater European states of colonies to govern or to develop or to exploit as the genius of the possessors might dictate, that the evolution of British traditions of foreign commercial policy began. We speedily became the possessors of great overseas territories, so that the problem was at the first, what it still is to-day, the dual one of imperial and foreign trade policy. The tradition when established was one of imperial self-sufficiency. By the chartering of privileged trading companies with exclusive rights to participation in trade with specified regions overseas, effective instruments were created for the pushing of business abroad. They were numerous, but the two greatest examples are ample illustrations of the system ; the Merchant Adventurers who wrested our trade with North-West Europe from the German Hansa in Tudor times, and the East India Company, which later laid the

foundations of the Indian Empire. Control by legislation was also undertaken, the most conspicuous examples being the Navigation Acts. The first of these, codifying the policy of Charles I. rather than introducing any new principle, was passed by Cromwell in 1651. The second, passed by the Restoration Parliament in 1660, was a re-enactment of the former, with provisions increasing its stringency. The intention was to encourage our industry, commerce and shipping, to secure the colonies almost entirely, and the other non-European countries as far as possible, as markets for English manufactures, and sources for English raw materials. A prosperous foreign trade; a sufficient gold reserve as the result of the sale abroad of manufactures, involving the appropriation to the needs of industry of as much raw material as possible and the suppression of industrial competition either from the colonies or foreign countries; a powerful naval reserve in shipping and mariners to be obtained by fostering commerce in British ships and by aiming as hard blows as possible at the great maritime commerce of the Dutch; these were the aims of the commercial policy of Mercantilism. It was a policy of power through economic prosperity. The provisions of the Navigation Acts, as finally settled in 1660, restricted the vessels in which goods might come to England from Asia, Africa, or America to British and Colonial ships manned chiefly by British sailors. These same ships, and also those of the country which produced the goods, might bring European produce. In this way British shipbuilding was to be encouraged, while Dutch shipping was to be totally excluded, since Holland was not a manufacturing country herself, and would have no Dutch goods to bring in Dutch ships. Tariff preferences were introduced, goods

in British ships paying lower customs than those in ships of the country of origin. Finally, certain goods useful for our manufactures, such as cotton, wool, indigo, and dye-woods, as well as sugar, tobacco and ginger, typical colonial produce, and suitable material for a flourishing entrepôt trade, were always to come to England from the colonies, and never to be shipped from the colonies direct to a foreign country.

These methods were often supplemented by tariff treaties. Charles II. concluded treaties with Spain, France, and other countries, whereby the contracting countries concluded bargains for the reduction of tariffs on goods of their respective production. The Methuen treaty of 1703, exchanging the removal of our prohibition on Portuguese wine for a removal of their prohibitive tariff on British cloth is particularly notable, since the contracting powers guaranteed each other most-favoured-nation treatment, by which each undertook to extend to the other reductions and removal of prohibitions offered to any third power, and not already conceded to the other party of the treaty.

There was little new, therefore, in the methods of state control of commerce to be added in the nineteenth century. Tariffs for the raising of revenue, and for the protection of industry, tariff wars, reciprocity, control of trade routes and shipping, and of the movement of commodities, policies of industrial protection and policies of self-sufficiency and power had all been tried. The great feature of the international commercial history of the nineteenth century is that all these things were brought into question, that the case for unrestricted commerce, upheld fitfully before, was once for all clearly enunciated by British economists and championed by British policy,

while other powers maintained almost unbroken allegiance to Protection.

The first serious set-back to the old policy was the revolt of the American colonies in 1776. There is very little reason to think that the economic restrictions placed on them by the Navigation Acts were a real burden, although the suppression of certain small manufactures, such as iron-smelting, was, in its own narrow sphere, to their disadvantage. The root of the whole trouble was the impatience of growing communities of close regulation by distant England. However, faith in the Mercantile System was shaken at the very time when the writings of Adam Smith were preparing the way for the clear enunciation of the theory of Free Trade. He was the first to demonstrate that both parties to a fair exchange were gainers because each got something which to him was more useful than the thing with which he parted, an argument favouring expansion of trade rather than restriction as a means of adding to national wealth. The famous chapter on the advantage of division of processes in industries, which begins *The Wealth of Nations*, could not fail to suggest its international counterpart of the division of all production among the whole world, each nation producing those things it was best fitted by situation and resources to produce, so that the mutual gain from exchange would be a maximum. Adam Smith rather prepared the way for the doctrine of Free Trade than enunciated it. It was to be nearly seventy years before the full doctrine was proclaimed in England. The Napoleonic wars and the years of depression afterwards, with the heavy debt of 800 million pounds, were not the periods in which to promulgate with any success a doctrine involving the removal of revenue-yielding duties. True, the political

aspect of customs dues was hidden by the revenue aspect, and *Laisser Faire* was no instigation to a careful enforcement of the Navigation Acts, but it was a period that of necessity clung to taxation. In their anxiety to raise sufficient revenue the government continually added new taxation, direct and indirect, internal and external, until trade and industry were so hampered, and the difficulties of collection became so great, that additional impositions yielded no additional revenue. Reductions and simplifications there had to be, and they were made by degrees, first by Huskisson and later by Peel. The directions in which these reductions were made were determined by the changing internal organisation of the country. The landed interest had no longer the chief voice in the state, for industry was expanding rapidly. Industry feared no competition, for England was becoming supreme in manufacture ; the great cry was for the unimpeded flow of raw materials and unhindered access to markets, in other words, for freedom of commerce. The fiscal reforms of Huskisson, in 1824 and 1825, and of Peel, in 1842, consisted therefore of simplification, the removal of large numbers of duties which yielded no revenue, and the reduction of duties on raw materials and partly-manufactured goods. The movement towards lessened restriction gained speed, urged by favourable circumstance. The Navigation Laws, already relaxed so far as to allow direct trade in all colonial produce between the colonies and foreign countries, were regarded with growing disfavour as hindrances to the supply of the commercial needs of our growing trade, and were repealed in 1845 (except as regards the coasting trade, which was not opened to foreign vessels until some years later). The climax of the movement was reached in the mid-forties. The growing

industrialism of the country was rendering it less capable of meeting its own needs in food. The distress of the poor in these "hungry forties" reinforced economic theories. The principles underlying the reduced taxation of Huskisson and Peel had not been lost sight of by them, although economic pressure and political organisation were the immediate occasions of reform. "I had acted," said Peel, in 1846, "with Mr. Huskisson in 1822, 1825, and 1826, in revising the commercial system, and applying to the system the principles of Free Trade." Those principles were now being proclaimed almost as part of the divine ordering of the universe by Cobden and Bright, who did not fail to use the argument of the food of the poor. Agriculture was loud in its opposition to the repeal of the Corn Laws, but industry was in its favour. Free trade in raw materials had already been obtained ; the import of wheat would encourage the export of manufactures in payment and would provide, in cheap food for the workers, a means towards cheap labour. The contentions of parties were overtaken by the failure of the harvest in 1845 with a consequent rapid rise in food prices which clinched the argument as to the danger of relying on the success of home harvests for food supplies. The Corn Laws were repealed, after fierce debate, in 1846. A light import duty was retained for a few years, but since 1849 there has never been any heavier tax than one shilling a quarter on the import of corn. Free Trade, that is to say, the levying of customs duties for purposes of revenue only, and on a basis of equitable incidence rather than with a view to assisting any economic interest, was almost an accomplished fact in Great Britain. Peel in the course of a few years completed the change. In practice and in principle Free Trade was to be the

British system in fiscal affairs for the remainder of the century.

Meanwhile the fiscal policies of foreign powers had been moving on other lines. Two powers, the United States and France, the one a new nation, the other an old nation transformed, were shaping their commercial policy, while a group of German states, emerging from the Napoleonic wars as part of a confederation in little more than name, was destined to become a real federation economically long before it became an Empire. All three, America, France, and Germany, played leading rôles in the commercial policy of the nineteenth century. They have all leaned more towards Protection than towards Free Trade.

Whatever theories may be popular in regard to tariff policy, it is seldom that they can find practical expression except in so far as they satisfy the practical needs of some interest in the state which has a real voice in government. In a state mainly agricultural there is usually a strong land party in favour of a freedom of commerce which allows of the easy exchange of the surplus crops for the manufactures of the industrial states abroad, but if a stronger agricultural state threatens to overwhelm them, they are likely to change their colours and clamour for Protection. It is consequently true, as a general statement, to say that in the first half of the nineteenth century, the Free Trade element in most European countries was agricultural, but that the advent of immense quantities of grain, and later, of meat, from newer countries, following the introduction of railways and steamships, has since placed agriculture on the side of the Protectionists. Industry, struggling in the earlier part of the century against the competition of Britain, the "workshop of the world," clamoured for Protection, although in those

countries which have become predominantly manufacturing there was always an industrial element in favour of free trade in foodstuffs. The opposing interests of agriculture and industry rendered the tariff policies of the earlier part of the century hesitating, and their history involved. In so far as there was a unifying influence, that influence was the spirit of nationalism.

In the United States the circumstances were at first the most favourable for the development of a definite commercial policy. The great agricultural resources of the country rendered it easily self-sufficing in food, so that the industrial problem was to a great degree isolated. Under the able leadership of the finance minister, Alexander Hamilton, the theory of the need of protection for infant industries was restated by the newly-federated states in the eighties of the century before last. It was no new idea, for it was the system under which English industries had been fostered hundreds of years before, but to Hamilton belongs the credit for its clear modern enunciation and its application to his own country, where the ambitions of a new state, delivered from restriction to agricultural production, and free to develop industrially as well, made it peculiarly welcome. The peace after 1815, therefore, found the United States protectionist, but a contrary interest was gaining power. The development of textile industry in Europe, and especially in England, was increasing the importance of cotton, so that a strong party of the agricultural type, made up of the cotton planters of the South, was crystallising into an opposition. The divided interest is reflected in a temporary reversion to lower tariffs, but the divergence between North and South, of which the tariff question was only one element, was only to be settled by war. The exhaustion

of the long-drawn-out Civil War told in favour of tariffs for revenue, as similar causes had done in England after 1815. By the time the clouds lifted the industrial development of the North and East, the opening up of the Middle West agriculturally, and the production within her own borders of the raw material for her own cotton industries, offered the best promise any state has ever seen of national self-sufficiency. The United States had resources, which they were not neglecting to develop, which could render them not only independent of foreign supplies of most things, but capable of producing such a surplus as to make them formidable competitors in all the markets of the world. Inevitably tariffs were raised, often to prohibition rates, and the United States, the one country that had held consistently to an official policy of Protection throughout, gave the world at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, a series of tariffs hardly rivalled in their extreme protectionism.

The idea of the development of a many-sided prosperity was also present to the nations of Europe after Waterloo. France owed her ideals in very large measure to Napoleon himself, who as Emperor, turned his attention to the economic development of his Empire as well as to her military ambitions abroad. At his fall the industrial revolution was already beginning for France. His heavy tariffs against the import of English manufactures and their ultimate prohibition were matters rather of strategy of war than of economic policy, but industry clung to the system of Protection, and moderate tariffs were the rule for France. The government of Louis XVIII. was responsible for reductions in duties on raw materials and for the maintenance of taxes on imported corn and

manufactures. Although Protection was not abandoned, Free Trade notions at length began to find a home in the state which regarded itself as the champion of liberty and brotherhood. The year 1847 was marked by a full-dress debate in the Chamber on the Free Trade question, and after the revolution Free Trade found a champion in Napoleon III.

Meanwhile German commercial matters had been proceeding on the lines of the removal of internal tariffs which impeded trade. The example set by Prussia in 1818 in removing a host of tolls and dues on goods moving between different parts of the kingdom was the beginning of a long series of simplifications in tariffs in which political and economic interests were largely mixed. The apostle of commercial unity was Friedrich List, whose doctrine of a national economy has been the counterpart of Free Trade. Under his influence the argument for national self-sufficiency revived and he promoted the ideal of a Germany commercially united. The realisation of his dream was slow. The bigger states were playing for the supremacy. Austria, the leader of the Germanic Confederation of the Congress of Vienna, was elbowed out ; a tariff union was established by Prussia and the northern states, and another was formed in the south by Würtemberg and Bavaria. Between them was a union of the smaller central states, which was soon swallowed up in the Prussian union. The complete union (except for the Hanseatic towns, Brunswick, Hanover and some lesser states, which came in afterwards, was achieved in 1834 and 1835—the “Tariff Union” (*Zollverein*). On the foundation of that commercial union was gradually erected the political union which was completed by Bismarck, who welded the states together and excluded Prussia's

chief rival for the leadership, Austria, by the ordeal of the two wars of 1866 and 1870.

Before the German Empire could begin its policy of national economic development on protectionist lines, a great wave of Free Trade sentiment swept over Europe. It had started in England under the leadership of Cobden, Bright and Peel, and it gained support on the Continent from Napoleon III. Anxious to establish friendly relations with England, and impressed by visits to her shores, and by the Great Exhibition, he was moved to put into practice his Free Trade tendencies, to copy the example of his prosperous neighbour. With characteristic independence, he dispensed as long as possible with the use of parliamentary machinery to achieve these ends. He reduced duties on the import of raw and half-manufactured iron and steel, on coal, and on numerous raw materials during the fifties by decree, and finally, in 1860, he concluded the important low-tariff treaty with England. While we undertook to lower duties on French wines and spirits, France was to reduce tariffs on English goods to a general level of 30 per cent. *ad valorem*. Sundry further reductions were made by decrees, and, last of all, the sanction of the Chambers was received in the form of the Tariff Law of 1863, ratifying the treaty. The treaty included the most-favoured-nation clause, a feature of most subsequent commercial treaties between friendly countries. The treaty with England was rapidly followed by other French treaties on similar lines with Belgium (1861), the Zollverein (1862), Italy (1863), Switzerland (1864), and with Norway and Sweden, the Hanseatic Cities, Spain, Austria, and the Netherlands in 1865-6. Almost all Europe was involved in a system of low tariffs by treaty, and the movement towards Free Trade was becoming general. Of all the

important powers, the United States, immersed in Civil War, alone stood apart.

It was, however, a movement which soon spent itself. Industry was developing in all countries, and the markets of the world for manufactured goods were becoming keenly competitive. Agriculture was brought into line with industry in desiring Protection by reason of the influx of wheat from the New World. Germany had become a nation with a policy, first of internal development for the wealth it brought, then of self-sufficiency as part of an intensely militarist programme. Colonial possessions were extending for all West-European Countries, especially as Africa was opened up and parcelled out, and the principle of colonial preference found favour. At each renewal of the treaties higher tariffs were arranged, and by the end of the nineteenth century there were few states other than our own which had not entirely deserted the policy of Free Trade and returned to high Protection.

Although the treaties of the sixties did not succeed in establishing Free Trade permanently in Europe, they had a lasting influence in setting up the machinery for commercial negotiations between powers. The usual term of a commercial treaty is twelve years, so that at regular intervals the tariff relations of the world come up for revision. The position is complicated by the most-favoured-nation clause, which is also important as the means by which the legislatures control tariff policy while allowing reasonable scope to their executives in concluding treaties. It has become common to establish statutory maxima and minima, making the maximum tariff in each case the starting-point for negotiation, and the minima the lowest to which rates may be reduced by treaty, so that as a general rule the minimum tariffs

become those offered to most favoured nations. Such was the system which lasted until the war of 1914-18 severed so many international relationships and abrogated half the treaties of the world.

There were other features of commercial policy, too. The method of control of trade was revived. States subsidised their shipping lines, either directly or through contracts for mail services, and in this, as in the revival of control generally, a leading part was played by Germany. The hand of the state was not always obvious; there were such institutions as the German Kartels, or great business combines, using their financial resources to sell their goods at a low price in foreign markets until they obtained control of them, the method that is, of "dumping." Merchandise marks acts, and restrictions on the working of patents, are among other examples of the practices of more nations than one. Only with the war, however, did the world learn with what immense success such methods had been applied by Germany, how far she had extended her hold on trade, and into what distant markets she had thrust herself, by methods of "peaceful penetration."

During this reaction the United Kingdom clung to Free Trade, partly as a principle, but still more because we had not at first the same needs and opportunities for the use of protective methods as influenced our neighbours. It was natural that the country with a more illustrious roll of great names in economic literature than any other in the world should listen to the abstract argument for non-interference in commerce with a willing ear, but it has seldom happened that commercial theory has held the field without the support of practical issues. Free Trade itself did not gain its great victory in England by dint of

the logic of the economists and the eloquence of Cobden and Bright alone, but only with the help of the demands of industry for materials and of the people for bread. Neither was it able to hold its own in Europe against the national and defensive need for self-sufficiency felt by the greater powers. Free Trade remained almost unchallenged for fifty years in England, because, first, the need of the industries for expansion, and, later, the trade for her great mercantile interests at sea and abroad, were best served by the unimpeded exchange of commodities. In commerce, as in international politics, we maintained an attitude of "splendid isolation."

Before the end of last century the tendencies which had been already matured into systems of high tariffs elsewhere began to exercise some influence in England. English industry had lost its position of overwhelming superiority, not by reason of decay, for it was strong and healthy still, but because other countries, their industrial revolutions completed, were reaching a high state of efficiency. Competition was keen, the evil effects of "dumping" were being realised, and the clever economic policy of Germany was winning her a monopoly in more than one new industry that invention and discovery brought into being. In the same way, the mercantile marines of other countries were becoming important, especially that of Germany, which, fostered by the state, was making immense strides. The commercial and industrial interests in this country began to take stock of the situation ; it seemed as well, at least, to ask ourselves whether Free Trade was the one true faith in commercial policy or not. Industry began to ask for protection against unfair competition, for a tariff wall behind which to rear new infant industries as their need was revealed.

Free Traders retorted that the security of the tariff would discourage initiative and energy in the protected trades, and at the same time the bogey of high prices was exhibited to the full. The dispute became one of tremendous heat and a good deal of venom, and as a result the cases both for Protection and Free Trade were drawn up in very great detail. One strong point greatly insisted upon by the tariff party was that Free Trade left us almost completely outside the treaty system which was regulating the commercial relations of the world. Because we had few tariffs with which to negotiate, so few directions in which we could offer reductions, therefore we could obtain few concessions from other countries. We had not the bargaining power of the tariff.

That is, in outline, the story of British Free Trade and its partial abandonment from the purely economic and commercial side. There was another side, the political and national side. The greatest force that had worked for the restoration of Protection in Europe had been nationalism. Germany, the new nation, wanted not only wealth, but self-sufficiency. France wanted the same resources to keep pace with her great enemy. The United States, developing resources of all kinds, and at last, after the Civil War, really one nation and not two, saw the advantages of self-sufficiency. It was possible for them all to get very near to self-sufficiency. They all had industrial resources, particularly coal and iron, and they all had large areas of agricultural territory. It is comparatively easy for a large country to live and to develop a many-sided life behind a tariff barrier. To us, a small country, hopelessly incapable even of supplying all our own food, the idea of national self-sufficiency was impossible. It is in a great measure because this was out

of the question for us that we did not revert, with the rest of the world, to Protection—the main incentive did not exist for us. The revival of interest in the colonies, and the closer touch with them brought about by modern communications, suggested the idea of *imperial* self-sufficiency. True, Great Britain could never be a self-sufficing nation, but the resources of the Empire were varied and big enough to enable it to get nearer than any nation in the world, not even excepting the United States, to self-sufficiency. It was the imperial movement that in England attacked Free Trade on the side of politics while competition was attacking it on the side of economics. The argument for imperial preference, championed by Joseph Chamberlain, the man inspired above all others by the vision of close union between the mother and daughter states, was added to the demands of industry and commerce, and drew into the tariff reform party many who would not have been convinced by the economic argument alone. After a century and a quarter of neglect the mercantile spirit was being once more acclaimed, but in a different form. The proposals for imperial policy were almost entirely concerned with tariffs, not as before, with control of trade and the movements of goods and ships.

There is no need to revive in detail the weary controversy which dominated politics at the beginning of the century. It is hardly too great a generalisation to describe it broadly as cheapness *versus* imperialism. In a perfectly internationalised world, with peace and goodwill and high honesty everywhere, the economic doctrine of Free Trade would be unassailable. Let all produce what they can best produce, and exchange their goods freely and without hindrance; so will the world reap the greatest advantage. Those who argued the opposite case

urged that the world was not internationalised, it was very really divided into nationalities and empires, and, therefore, national material welfare and defence must be the considerations of practical politics. The abstract argument may conceivably go on for ever, while actual politics are swayed by the needs and circumstances of the moment.

The tariff question fell into abeyance, but was not neglected, much less forgotten, when the Unionist party fell from power to be replaced by a party devoting its time, and devoting it with no small success, to social and domestic problems. The war has brought it into something of its old prominence. The distrust of German methods, the more real feeling of unity between Britain and the colonies which has grown up as they have striven in a common cause, on the one hand, and, on the other, the movement towards internationalism, and the fear that the economic weapon may once more endanger peace, are matters demanding the attention of those who are to reconstruct the world. At the same time the conception of method has changed as experience in the control of trade has been gained, so that tariffs are no longer regarded as the principal instruments of a protective policy. The old controversy was between "Free Traders" and "Tariff Reformers"; the war marks the end of the great career of British Free Trade, and at the same time makes it quite inadequate to describe the protectionist of the future as a "*Tariff Reformer*." As in so many other matters of state, the war has permanently changed the nature of the problem. That problem now is to settle the relationship between Protection and Internationalism, giving a wider meaning of the word "Protection" than it connoted a few years ago.

## CHAPTER XII

### CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

For the origins of the principles and institutions upon which we pride ourselves most—the Rule of Law, Trial by Jury, our system of Local Government, Parliament, limited Monarchy—we have to go a long way back, into the Middle Ages. But by the time of the Revolution of 1689 these principles and institutions had been established, constitutional progress having reached the height of its development in the recognition of the “sovereignty” of Parliament. Perhaps the greatest interest of the next three reigns is the gradual working out of certain consequences of the sovereignty of Parliament, an only semi-conscious groping towards them on the part of persons, for the most part, not deliberately aiming at their consummation. Such consequences were the withdrawal of the King from active personal participation in political conflict—only very partial in the case of William III., complete with the accession of the Hanoverians—secondly, the elaboration of the “party system,” the beginnings of the Cabinet, which in spite of the efforts made to frustrate it in the prosecution of the Whig Junto and in certain clauses of the Act of Settlement, succeeded in completely superseding the Privy Council as the source of executive authority, the triumph of the principle of the close association of executive and legislative, the direction of parliamentary business by the Cabinet (one of the most distinctive

features of the British constitutional system despite the strenuous efforts made by means of place bills and other methods of opposition to defeat this supposedly dangerous anomaly) and the organisation of another distinctively British institution; "His Majesty's Opposition." If parliamentary sovereignty displacing absolution by hereditary right necessitated the party system and the party system necessitated the Cabinet, the Cabinet necessitated the Prime Minister. Though he disclaimed such a title (which, though not becoming an official designation till 1905, is, however, first heard of in his day), Sir Robert Walpole, owing to the self-effacement of the King, his own hatred of rivals and ascendancy over the comparative mediocrities who served with him, and his use of influence by means of place-bestowing and funds-distributing, had secured a personal ascendancy over both Cabinet and Parliament, which meant party discipline and unity of policy.

The process was very much facilitated, very much simplified by the fact that the entire polity of the country, Crown, Parliament, Cabinet, local courts, was dominated by the great Whig land-owning aristocracy. That had its utility, was convenient: but it had obviously very great disadvantages, and led to grave abuses. Although the system of government was a popular one in the sense that the tendency of its development was clearly towards popular control; essentially, on the other hand, it was in its present nature, not at all democratic, but oligarchic; and despite its alliance with the new moneyed interest, which was beginning to make Lombard Street of political as well as financial portent, the oligarchy was based not upon the power of the future—business, but the power of the past—land proprietorship. The House of Commons,

controlled by the great Whig families, was neither truly representative nor independent. Its glory lay in its great traditions—in the record of its successful warfare with Stuart autocracy, the record of the patriotism of its country gentlemen, its Pyms, Hampdens, Cromwells, Sidneys, and in the possession of the powers for which it fought, and which it had won—especially in the financial control of the Commons, the responsibility of ministers, the dependence of the armed forces of the Crown upon its sanction, as secured by the Annual Mutiny Act, its insistence upon its members' right to freedom of speech and freedom from arrest, and upon every citizen's right to petition and redress. And despite what were from our more modern point of view its glaring defects—its dependence upon an aristocracy which made the House of Lords the powerful stronghold of one political party and controlled the constituencies which returned the members of the Lower Chamber, despite also the growing inequality of the electoral system, the large number of rotten boroughs, the absence of representation for the growing towns of the north—nevertheless, when all is said and done, Parliament in the mid-eighteenth century reflected with a very fair approximation to accuracy the actual facts of political authority in the country, and was far from unpopular. It had a great prestige as the most powerful representative assembly in the world.

The great exponent of the British Constitution in the halcyon days of Whiggism is Edmund Burke. Burke glories in the party system, with stout, sober common-sense, seeing in party, "a body of men united for promoting by their joint endeavours the national interest upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed."

He saw the danger in a constitutional state of government which was not based upon the support of public opinion ; and it is the party system which enables popular government to be secured, however vacillating that public opinion may be. The principles underlying the Revolution settlement had involved this method of utilising Parliament as " a government-making organ," under the control of public opinion. Parliament was the focus of political activity, and the reflection of opinion throughout the country. Government was carried on in accordance with the wishes of the people thus expressed, so that there existed the reality of government by debate, by discussion.

A determined attempt to break up this system was made by George III., acting on the doctrines of Bolingbroke, as enunciated in his *Patriot King*, which are inimical to party. Here it is not the party, but the sovereign, conscientiously ruling in his people's interests, that is the motive force of politics. The form of political activity thus becomes not Parliament, but the royal closet, and the responsible ministers of state are not the Parliament-created, Parliament-controlled Cabinet, but the King's servants, selected by himself. Most conscientiously, most patriotically, George strove to break up the Whig oligarchy, to substitute for the Cabinet the departmental system, using composite ministries, sometimes veritable ministries " of all the talents," at others, collections of complete mediocrities, but selected not at all in accordance with their political views—only in accordance with their willingness to carry out the royal policy. The royal experiment, a wholly retrograde movement, was responsible for several national disasters, and the period during which it was made is one of the most inglorious in our annals. It was definitely defeated with the accession to power of the

Younger Pitt ; and its death-knell may be said to have been struck by the acquiescence of the King in the Prime Minister's refusal to allow Lord Thurlow to remain in his Cabinet. That incident was at the same time a triumphal vindication of the solidarity of the Cabinet and of its dependence upon the Prime Minister. The Cabinet system of Robert Walpole was reaffirmed and re-emphasised by Pitt. The beginning of the nineteenth century sees the reaction definitely at an end, and the party and the Cabinet systems are not again challenged.

The interest of constitutional history at once shifts to the question of parliamentary reform. Will the constitutional system prove sufficiently elastic to adapt itself to the requirements of that vast and complicated political, industrial, and social change to which we give the name Industrial Revolution ; will Parliament be altered in composition to reflect the changes in the density and the distribution of the population ? Will the new public opinion of the manufacturing towns be represented in Parliament ? The franchise, redistribution of seats—these are the matters of critical importance. The Reform Act of 1832, as we have seen, besides sweeping away a number of rotten boroughs—it abolished fifty-six of them and reduced thirty others to one member apiece—and giving the hundred and forty-three seats, so rendered vacant, to the counties and certain of the rising industrial towns, especially in the north—established in the boroughs the £10 householder franchise, and in the counties gave the vote to leaseholders and copyholders of property of the value of £10, and to tenants at will paying an annual rental of £50. The Act of 1832, that is to say, recognised the principle of redistributing seats in accordance with changes in the distribution of the population, and also

admitted the claim that the franchise must not be regarded as rigidly fixed, but must expand to include new elements in the population. The Act is, indeed, much more important because of the principles it conceded than because of what it actually accomplished. The amount of redistribution and of enlargement of the franchise that it effected was small ; the property qualification still remained (for the most part) the test of suitability to exercise the rights of citizenship. But as "the thin end of the wedge" the great Reform Act was all-significant.

The next Reform Act—that of 1867—considerably lowered the value of the property required and extended the principle of qualification for occupation. Thus, on the one hand, £5 was substituted for £10 as the minimum property value, and, on the other hand, in counties, the vote was given to occupants of tenements rated at £12, while in boroughs it was given by what is known as the household franchise, to all occupants of dwelling-houses who have duly paid their rates and, secondly, by the lodger franchise, to those who have lodged in the same apartments, being of the annual value of £10, during the whole of the qualifying year. The chief significance of this second Reform Act is in the extension of the occupational franchise which makes the test of citizenship not the simple fact of property ownership—having a stake in the country—but rather the fact of being a person of good *bond fides*, known to the authorities from being a regular occupant of a respectable dwelling-house and on the rate-collector's list—able to pay something to the upkeep of the country.

The Act of 1884 did little more than extend to the counties what the Act of 1867 had given to the towns—namely, the £10 occupation franchise together with the household and lodger qualifications. But it should be

noted that it also enabled a gardener, for example, occupying a lodge or cottage in virtue of his employment to be entitled to the vote as an occupant in spite of the fact that he paid no rent. Thus a new class was introduced, and the democratic tendency revealed in the Act of 1867 was still further extended.

These two measures very considerably increased the numbers of the electorate. But it was left for the period of the Great War to inaugurate changes—both as regards the dimensions of the electorate and the principles underlying such extension—much more far-reaching and significant than those introduced by any of the previous Acts. The Franchise Act of 1918 has given us virtually universal manhood suffrage and a limited woman's suffrage, namely, for all women of thirty years and over. The property qualification was swept away. Mere residence for six months was all that was required—and that need not be continuous. Other qualifications were—the occupation of business premises of £10 in value in the case of men, £5 in the case of women, the possession of a university degree and, in the case of women, being the wife of a voter. The changes effected by the Franchise Act of 1918 are absolutely radical. It is not only the property qualification that has gone—gone also have the sex restriction, and even the requirement of *continuous* residence, and, as a war-time measure, the 21 years of age limit. It was felt that the man who was old enough to be called upon to fight for his country must be deemed to be old enough to vote for it. There is a radical change of principle underlying all this, a new conception of what it is that fits a person to exercise the powers and to enjoy the full privileges of citizenship. It is not having a specially big stake in the country and a specially great

interest in its stability. It is coming to be little more than this—the fact of having reached man's estate and not being a vagrant, being possessed of a verifiable place of residence. This Act is, then, a truly democratic document. Yet it must not be taken as postulating virtually no qualification. Quite the contrary. It is no democratic theory which declares, unequivocably, that all men, irrespective of their endowments, are capable of self-government. It is no mere accident that the most far-reaching of our franchise measures was accompanied by the most far-reaching of our education acts. The two measures are intimately related. Less than ever in our modern state is it an uneducated, an uninstructed, a thoughtless public opinion that is required. The conception underlying the Act is of a very different nature, namely, that the state vitally needs the enlightened opinion not of a section of the people, selected upon whatsoever system, but of the entire community. There is one "special" vote that the Act not only does not take away—but extends—the "university" vote: this is significant. It is expected that the vote of the citizen will be the vote of an intelligent, educated person.

There are other very important provisions in the 1918 Act—the reduction of plural voting to the exercise of not more than *two* votes, the arrangements for all voting at general elections to take place on one and the same day, which make it difficult for one to make use of even two votes, and a redistribution of seats so as to give one member to about 23,000 voters. The reduction of the "plural" vote is the corollary of the abandonment of the conception underlying the "property" qualification, the one day poll system reduces the possibilities of corruption, and also has the salutary effect of putting an end to the

tendency for one part of the electorate—those polling late in a general election—being unduly influenced by the verdict of those polling earlier.

The third feature—the attempt to equalise the size of constituencies—is also important, because significant of one feature of our present representation system which distinguishes it from the system prevailing in pre-reform days, not necessarily for the better. Nowadays, the member of parliament represents simply a number of people who happen to live in the same area. The area may have no distinctive features, and its boundaries may be very arbitrary. It has come to be the case that the country is simply divided, for convenience' sake, into a number of districts with approximately equal electorates. Often the parliamentary divisions cut across local divisions. A man may think of himself as living in Dulwich, yet as a voter be in Camberwell. The old meaning of "county and borough" members has entirely departed. It is not merely that the towns or boroughs have in many cases been subdivided—and that the same has happened with practically every county; the change is not only geographical. In the old days the member for a borough really did represent a corporation, and a county member also represented a community. In each case the constituency was not simply a parliamentary division—it was a microcosm, an organism, and an entity possessed of a history, traditions and the consciousness of unity. In neither case was it—as it is to-day—a mere geographical expression, a haphazard collection of individuals. It is the secret of the peculiar strength of the English Parliament in its early days that its members were not simply scratch individuals standing for scratch collections of other individuals, but were personages invested with the

authority and with the personality of bodies having a vivid political life of their own. Since 1832 the local political community has become a thing of the past. Men no longer vote together because they carry out other political duties together.

That there is a certain loss in this is obvious : there is so much the less authority behind the verdict of the individual constituency, so much the less of really organised opinion behind the individual member in Parliament. On the other hand, it has to be remembered that the fact that it is no longer organised on a local basis does not mean that our communal feeling has disappeared. The man voting "Labour" in Gloucester, and the man voting "Labour" in Greenock, are aware of their fellowship together in industrial interests. In the second place, the tendency to disregard local division indicates a marked upward tendency, if there be a genuine ability on the part even of those electorates that are aware of strong local interests to weigh not those but wider considerations in making their choice of their representative, and to realise themselves as the whole country's citizens, not merely the inhabitants of such and such a town or district.

It must not be supposed from this that the influence of modern conditions has been to relegate the local interest, the local authority to a position of comparative insignificance, emphasising always the importance of the entire community. The reverse has been in fact the case. If the parliamentary divisions have become in many cases unreal, other local units have become a great deal more real and vastly more important than heretofore. The traditional genius of the race for local government, great asset as it was in the Middle Ages, has become infinitely more valuable during the last century of our history than

in any previous epoch. The enormous complexity of the national life has rendered extensive decentralisation indispensable, and has laid ever-increasing burdens of work and responsibility on local bodies. The old popular courts, coming down to us from Anglo-Saxon days, of hundred and shire, vill and borough, had fallen into desuetude by the time of the Tudors. Their functions, for the most part, had come to be performed by the country gentlemen, justices of the peace. Charged with the superintendence of the police system and of the constabulary, and with the administration of justice in their Quarter Sessions, they were also given the control of the Poor Law system of 1601, and many other administrative duties, the execution of all manner of Acts of Parliament, so that a writer on the subject of their work in Elizabeth's day, named Lambard, speaks of their being burdened with whole "stacks of Statutes." There were no other efficient persons who could be entrusted with the execution of laws and the maintenance of the peace: so that the tendency for Parliament to put more and more upon the shoulders of the justices, clear enough under the Tudors, became more and more pronounced in the two following centuries. The boroughs ought to have been able to produce something in the shape of efficient local justice and administration, but the consistent policy of the Tudor and Stuart royal houses of buying corporations in order to secure subservient representatives at Westminster, led to their complete corruption. The work of the justices of the peace was an honour to men who for the most part carried out their very onerous duties in no narrow oligarchical spirit, but very honestly, painstakingly and conscientiously. But the system was not one which could possibly work successfully in the new conditions introduced

by the Industrial Revolution. It was impossible any longer to place the entire burden of local administration on the shoulders of one authority. Not only was the population increasing with great rapidity, but the new social conditions attendant on the great afflatus given to industry gave rise to many new local requirements even in the days of *Laisser Faire*. One of the worst troubles of the troublous times at the opening of the nineteenth century was the absence of any local authority in the new urban centres to deal summarily with the evils of overcrowding and insanitary conditions, which sprang up, mushroom-like, with the introduction of the factory system.

Accordingly, the Reform Act of 1832 is closely followed by two very important Local Government measures, the Poor Law of 1834, instituting its Poor Law Unions, each consisting of a number of parishes, and presided over by a Board of Guardians, of whom the justices of the peace are ex-officio members, but who also include a number of persons elected by the rate-payers; secondly, the great Municipal Reform Act of 1835, a measure much more democratic than the Reform Act of 1832, and very nearly as epoch-making an achievement. This act ruthlessly swept away all archaic oligarchical privileges of guild or mystery, and introduced a uniform system for the whole country. Henceforward the municipal borough was to be organised as follows. There was to be a corporation consisting of mayor, aldermen, councillors, and burgesses, the councillors being elected by the burgesses. The Council, which is the governing body of the borough, is entrusted with extensive powers—the management of all the corporation's property, the maintenance of a police, the provision of adequate lighting and paving. It has also the power of making and enforcing bye-laws, *i.e.*,

regulations relating to its own area. It was not at once after the passing of the great Act of 1835 that full advantage was taken of the opportunities created by the new system, that all the manifold functions whereby such bodies could minister to the needs of the town they represented were entrusted to them. For the organisation of local government on the same scale of efficiency outside them, as was provided for in the towns by the Act of 1835 we had to wait until 1888, when another great measure, a Local Government Act, came into being. This, like the Municipal Reform Act, was a democratic measure, transferring the control of affairs in the counties to popularly elected bodies—County Councils, consisting, under a Chairman, of Aldermen and Councillors, with the Clerk of the Peace as Clerk of the Council, a treasurer and certain official assistants or advisers, medical officers, public analysts, etc. By the same Act also were created County Boroughs ; that is to say, large boroughs were entrusted with powers in addition to those they possessed as municipal boroughs, such as are possessed by County Councils. The granting of such additional powers does not, it should be noted, alter the government of the borough in question, or transform it into a county. To the same act is due the creation of the unique County Council, that of London, which has special powers beyond that of the ordinary County Council.

The symmetry of our national system of local government was completed in 1894 by the creation of the Urban and Rural District Councils, representative assemblies analogous to the Borough and County Councils, only working for the smaller units of the lesser towns (not boroughs), and the villages. So that just as the old shire and borough courts have their modern equivalent

democratic and representative bodies, so do also the township and the parish.

A large proportion of the duties performed by these various local bodies, larger or smaller, are of a sanitary nature, and came to them as the result of certain Public Health Acts, the first passed in 1848, the second in 1875, superseding the first, itself several times since amended. Such duties are those of making and supervising sewers and drains, of removing and destroying refuse, of doing what is possible to prevent the spreading of infectious diseases, especially by compelling the notification of such maladies, of supervising the water supply and in particular preventing its contamination. Housing, more especially since the Town Planning Act of 1909, has become very much the concern of local sanitary authorities, which may now not only inspect dwellings and, if they think fit, order the repair or demolition of those they condemn, but may also actively participate in schemes for the building of better houses. The duties of the County Councils, in particular, are most heterogeneous. In addition to the old burden of the justices—the control and maintenance of roads, control of rivers—seeing to the prevention of their pollution and to the conserving of fish, the provision of lunatic asylums, etc., they have since the Education Act of 1902 become educational authorities.

In one way and another all the different local bodies—those representative of the larger units naturally most of all—have, during the period since 1835, been given more and more business to transact in order to meet the ever-growing requirements of modern society, and this tendency is bound to increase. So much greater has the sphere of decentralised government become, indeed, that a thorough system of central control over the activities of so many

local authorities has been rendered imperative. Accordingly, in 1871, there came into existence the Local Government Board, soon one of the most important of government departments. Its separate identity dates from then, though it was really an amalgamation of three different bodies—the Board of Public Health, the Poor Law Commissioners Board, and the Local Government department of the Home Office. The central department co-ordinated the work of local government by issuing orders and directions, and by sending inspectors to view asylums, workhouses, etc. While securing a certain uniformity of system, it was a safeguard against slackness, incompetence or extravagance on the part of the local bodies ; and also settled disputes between these, audited and examined the accounts of Boards of Guardians, and was a check on the appointment of officials, while at the same time giving them security of tenure. The Local Government Board has now been swallowed up in the Ministry of Health.

The chief characteristics of the development of local government in the last century have clearly been the introduction of a symmetrical organisation, of democratic representative bodies, and, in many cases, of expert and professional elements in place of the rule of amateurs. The tendencies towards greater symmetry, and towards professionalism, have also been very notable in our judicial system during the same period. The coping stone to a number of reforms was the Supreme Court of Judicature Act of 1873, which reconstituted the ancient courts, and which, broadly speaking, created a Supreme Court of Judicature consisting of two Chambers, the lower, entitled the High Court of Justice, and consisting of the King's Bench on the one hand and Chancery on the other,

but also including the Probate, Divorce, and Admiralty division ; the higher, a Court of Appeal, theoretically one tribunal, but in reality sitting in two sections, one to hear appeals from the King's bench, the other from the Chancery division. The separate identity—though it was retained by the Act of 1873—of the Courts of Exchequer and Common Pleas, has since dropped out, and they have become merged in the Court of King's Bench. Theoretically any kind of action can be started in either of the two great courts, but in practice there is now a perfectly clear distinction—King's Bench being mainly concerned with criminal, and Chancery with civil cases. The system of appeal has been extended to include criminal cases, heretofore excluded, by the institution of the Court of Criminal Appeal in 1907. Another innovation in the direction of reorganisation of our judicature came in the year 1846 when County Courts were instituted. The system has been since extended by the County Courts Acts of 1888 and 1903. These courts were founded to take the place of certain independent tribunals, known as Courts of Requests, which had been the successors of the decrepit hundred and shire Courts. These County Courts had no connection whatever with any particular counties ; they simply stood to the Court of Chancery in civil cases as the Quarter Sessions did in criminal cases to the King's Bench.

The second tendency towards professionalism in place of the work of the amateur is seen in the fact of the Grand Jury's having become a mere formality, and having indeed during the war dropped out altogether, in the fact that at Quarter Sessions, though all the Justices of the Peace from the County are entitled to sit and to vote, yet in practice their Chairman acts as judge, and sometimes

receives a salary for doing so ; finally, and this is the most significant fact of the three—that in boroughs we have a definitely professional lawyer, appointed by the Crown, named the Recorder, hearing the “indictable cases” of Quarter Sessions, and that in London and several of the largest towns the place of the Justice of the Peace in the police courts is now taken by the stipendiary, *i.e.* paid magistrate, also a professional lawyer.

It is not that men willing and able to give their leisure gratuitously to administrative and judicial work are no longer wanted ; but that modern conditions demand more exacting work, greater executive ability and detailed knowledge and skill than the state has the right to expect of amateurs. Thus the inevitable tendency of the past century has been towards the marked increase of officialdom, the appearance of more and more paid servants of the Crown in every department of government. This is so deeply significant a fact that it may well be urged that the most essential feature of our constitutional history in the period has been the development of the bureaucracy. Once *Laisser Faire* had been defeated and it had come to be recognised that it was the business of the state to supervise one sphere of national activity after another, the persistent enlargement of the official class was unavoidable. Just as the tendency towards state-interference has been most rapid and most notable in recent years, so has the increase in the bureaucracy. Yet the bureaucratic trend was important and distinctive fifty years ago, and when the Civil Service was thrown open to general competition, this was a recognition not only that it was no longer just to preserve administrative posts for men of influence merely, but also that it was inexpedient for the state to be satisfied with any system which did

not secure to it the help of the best possible men available for the ranks of the permanent officials.

The famous book by Bagehot on the English Constitution, although all that it has to say about the Crown, and most of what it has to say about the Cabinet and Parliament, is still admirably true and useful, is perhaps mainly of utility nowadays because of the indication it affords of how far we have travelled since 1867, and of the vitally important respects in which the English Constitution as it is to-day differs from what it was in Bagehot's time. Much of the most significant constitutional history of England is the constitutional history of the last fifty years. Very significant, in the light of this idea, is Bagehot's complete omission to describe the civil service, the bureaucracy. The word bureaucracy was unpopular then—it is unpopular now. It was a word applied to the reactionary government of Russia—not at all respectable, and not thought of as applicable to Great Britain; certainly not as descriptive of one of the most characteristic features of our system of government and our constitution. But it was not only that the word and the idea of bureaucracy were unpopular; it was that it was in 1867 possible for even the most acute observer not to perceive the significance of Whitehall as compared with Westminster. It is impossible not to perceive it now. It would be felt to be a most lopsided review of the Constitution which devoted most of its attention to Parliament and said nothing at all about the government departments and their numerous staffs. In the eye of the general public, let alone the acute observer, administration looms at least as large as legislation. The general public are learning the names of permanent chief secretaries as well as those of Cabinet Ministers.

The expansion of the government offices since the middle of the last century has been immense—both the increase in the functions and the labours of those already in existence, and the addition of one new department after another. With the ever-growing expensiveness of government, the enormous increase in the revenue necessary to meet the cost, the work of the Treasury and of the Inland Revenue has necessarily been vastly reduplicated. The work of the Home Office has grown so much that it has had to shed some of its former functions; trade expansion has necessarily produced an increase in the commercial work done by the Foreign Office. The labours of the Post Office are almost entirely the creation of the past century. In addition to the original duty of carrying letters, the Postmaster-General's department has been given the control of telegraph and telephone services, of a savings bank, the payment of Old Age Pensions. The very important Local Government Board has, as we have seen, existed only since 1871. The Board of Works has existed as a separate entity only since 1852. The Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, which in 1889 took over the duties of various commissioners, Tithe, Drainage, University and College, Estates and Inclosure Commissioners, and in 1903 certain duties hitherto performed by the Board of Trade with respect to both sea and river fisheries, has since the war become even more important, because of the necessity of greatly increased home production and the revival in domestic agriculture consequent upon that. Recent experience has shown the need for reorganisation, and we are now to have a Ministry of Agriculture instead of the old Board, with the extraneous sub-department of Fisheries removed, and with a more expert staff. The Board of Education, succeeding in

1899 the old and unsatisfactory education department, has continued to increase its activities, and its sphere of influence, and as the scope of national education widens must inevitably become an increasingly vital and an increasingly busy department of government. The Board of Trade has entirely altered its character since the middle of the nineteenth century, and has enormously increased in importance. During the first half of the century it did little more than collect statistics and act as an advisory body regarding trade matters for the benefit of the other state departments ; but when the state came more and more to take over control of industry, it did so through the Board of Trade, so that one new function after another was added to it. It controlled railways, issuing regulations for the better security of passengers and workers ; inquiring into the causes of accidents ; and its sanction had to be sought for any new railway project. It controlled shipping, in the same sort of way—and with shipping were included harbours, lighthouses, and lightships. It kept an eye on private enterprises, maintaining a register of joint stock companies. It was interested in the working of the bankruptcy laws. It maintained the Labour Exchanges when they were established. One of its outstanding functions came to be arbitration in labour disputes. During the War it was found necessary to supplement the work of the Board of Trade, and some of its activities were handed over to the Ministry of Labour and the Shipping Controller. In the future it is bound to be affected in a similar way by the newly created Ministry of Transport. In 1918, the Board was re-organised, being divided into two distinct departments, one of Commerce and Industry, the other of Public Services Administration. The latter has to carry on

the functions of a permanent routine nature, doing the work hitherto done by the Marine, Railway, Harbour Companies, and Bankruptcy departments. The former is entrusted with the task of obtaining information, thinking out and then making expert suggestions, and giving all others expert assistance for the furtherance of the national trade and for the better conduct of our commercial and industrial policy. A new sub-department is concerned with the promotion of new trades and enterprises; another, constituted by the Patent Office, is devoted to the encouragement of inventions, and the protection of the commercial public from the abuse of monopoly; another is engaged in economic research.

When it is considered that in addition to the major departments in Whitehall there are very many others, such, for example, as the Ecclesiastical and the Charity Commissioners, the Public Record Office, the Public Works Loans Department, and that during the War, in addition to the new departments just mentioned, there have been others, the Food Control department, the Ministries of Munitions and Pensions and Reconstruction, and that in addition to centralised offices in London, there are an enormous number of administrative offices connected with local government all over the country, the vast extent of officialdom in Great Britain at the present day can be adequately imagined and realised.

The extent must be apparent, and also the influence. In the administrative departments the permanent official is apt to have paramount authority, not only as regards daily routine, but in shaping policy. This has proved to be the case especially in the Home Office and Local Government Board. Those constantly having their

finger on the pulse of the machine whose working they control, and in daily contact with its mechanism are bound to have, as a result of that experience, a deeper insight into the needs of their work than the perhaps very transient politician visitor. And the influence of the permanent official is salutary in maintaining a stability and uniformity which are urgently required for the efficient working of their machine.

If we hear nowadays complaints of the red tape and circumlocution of government offices, we have during recent years heard a great deal more in criticism of Parliament, and this is most significant.

Undoubtedly a feeling had, just before the War, sprung up among many, that Parliament was not effective, that it wasted a great deal of time, that it did little but talk, and that its talk did not affect the situation. The impression of the impotence of Parliament had been much strengthened by the failure to solve by parliamentary means the most pressing problems of the day. Such was the Irish question. If the question was to be solved at all, it was clear that it would not be settled at Westminster. Neither had Parliament contributed much towards the solution of the Labour unrest ; it seemed powerless even against the militants. Always the really important work seemed to be done outside Parliament. Whenever there was a big labour dispute in progress, it was not what was said in Parliament that mattered, but what was being done by Sir George Askwith at the Board of Trade. In fact the tendency seemed general. Whenever any question became critical, it was removed from Parliament altogether. In another way the same sort of tendency was apparent. Administration seemed on the whole more vitally important than legislation—keeping the machinery of

government in working order than altering it. Ministers spent more and more time in their offices, less and less at Westminster. Sometimes their attendances on the Treasury bench seemed so perfunctory as to suggest a feeling on their part that they were really wasting time by being there at all. At the same time it was becoming increasingly difficult for members of Parliament to maintain an efficient criticism of government departments. Heads of departments seemed often to act rather as screens than as luminants of the work carried on under their direction. They seemed often instead of welcoming inquiry to be anxious only to stifle it. The advantages of our British system of including the executive in the legislative, upon which the exponents of our constitution have usually descended with the greatest pride and delight, did not appear self-evident in such circumstances.

These were not the only reasons why the activities of the two Houses seemed to many to be sinking in importance. There was another source besides the predominancy of Whitehall for the supposed futility of Westminster. That was the increasing rigidity of the party machine and autocracy of the Cabinet. In spite of the fact that the emergence of new parties had complicated the "straight" fight of the days of Disraeli and Gladstone, party discipline was becoming stronger than ever. The independent member had virtually no chance of making his mark. It was exceedingly difficult for any one to be returned to the House of Commons at all unless he first subscribed to the whole creed of one of the organised parties. Once in the House he was dragooned by the "whips." The private member's bill had no chance of success unless it obtained the favour of the party in power, and was included in their legislative programme. That programme had

become such a portentous thing that there was no time for any other legislation. Cabinets, secure of their substantial majority, assured of a constant loyalty maintained by the whips, ruled the Commons almost absolutely. They almost entirely controlled its time-table. By the ever growing use of the closure they could, whenever they thought fit, drastically shut down debate and settle the question at issue by the practically automatic verdict of the division lobby. In such circumstances what was the use of debate at all ? It had been a proud boast that our system was one of government by discussion. Was that any longer an accurate description of a system in which the rank and file of the members of the representative assembly were little more than vote-recording nonentities ? No one cared very much what they said or troubled to listen. So far as speeches went, it was only the two front benches on either side of the House that mattered ; the rest were only so many sheep to be led in docile fashion into their respective lobbies. There had grown up a rather widespread contempt of the mere politician. To be a member of Parliament was no longer necessarily to be held in honour ; on the contrary, it was rather to be derided as a futile incompetent, out of touch with reality. And not only to be thought of as futile, but quite likely as dishonest into the bargain ; for a good deal of criticism was being levelled against the manipulation of those indispensable adjuncts of party organisation—the party funds and the honours list : but setting aside the question of actual corruption, did not the intense rigidity of the modern party system discourage intellectual honesty as well as reduce parliamentary debate to a futility ? In short, had not the party system, in which we had so much prided ourselves, become a curse ?

That Parliament and our distinctive political system have of recent years lost something in credit is certainly true ; but what are the alternatives to our system ? There are only three other possibilities for a representative government. One of them need only be mentioned—that of the Reichstag prior to the revolution in Germany. It was little more than a debating society, with virtually no control over policy at all. There is the American system of rigid divisions of powers ; there is the group system as, for example, in France. The adoption of the severance of executive and legislative by Great Britain would not make criticism of administration any easier, and would make criticism of policy more difficult. Our general election system, whereby governments are made and unmade by the will of the citizens, the systematisation of revolution (according to Seeley), has not ceased to have the supreme advantage of providing a safety-valve for the national feeling, of rendering government sensitive to the variable winds of public opinion, and providing the all-important requisite of adaptability. The other alternative is the group system ; and that has its own very serious disadvantages. Governments can hardly exist at all without the support of several groups. To secure such support there has to be preliminary bargaining, in which some watering down of principle, some sacrifice of parts of a consistent programme are almost inevitable. Even so governments have an insecure existence, are at any time liable to be defeated by a new combination of groups and rarely have a long life. Such instability is a bad thing for the modern state.

If it be accepted that no alternative offers a necessary improvement, are we to take the view that we are presented with a mere choice of evils ? It is best to inquire

what it is in recent political conditions that has given rise to the supposed present evils of our system : and here the answer is plain. They are due to two factors. The first of these is the immense and increasing area of state-interference. Governments have infinitely more work to do than was dreamed of in the days when the party system was first evolved. Political life can no longer be leisurely ; it is forced to be energetic. The time and tide of the modern industrialised world wait for no man. Government by discussion is a fine thing ; but quick decisions in present-day conditions may be much more vitally necessary. Business methods are essential, and discussion has to be limited, and kept to the point. Debate in an assemblage of hundreds of members is apt to wander. Accordingly, more and more the really effective work of Parliament has been transferred from the open floor of the House to small committees. Criticism of legislative measures by a small number of selected experts is much more useful than the probably rambling and disjointed discussion of a large assemblage, where much time may be wasted by the intervention of the indifferent, the ignorant, and the obstructionist. The result of the business-like tendency to have recourse more and more to standing committees means inevitably that the outside public, not seeing the really important labours of Parliament, tends to imagine that it does not labour, though the truth is that it now works as it never did before. What is demanded by the present situation is not a change of the party system, but its freedom from many encumbrances. Parliamentary procedure has been very apt to spell procrastination, and further reform of rules of procedure is certainly needed. Much more essential is some measure of devolution. Parliament is utterly

overweighted by the mass of business that is nowadays thrust upon it. It cannot possibly do it all thoroughly. The expedient of the select committee is open to the serious objection that it removes too much of the serious business of Parliament from general criticism by the Lower House. Sooner or later it seems perfectly clear some method of decentralisation must be found, and the expedient of separate minor parliaments for the different constituent countries of the Union to manage their own individual affairs seems the most obvious and perhaps the most satisfactory.

The second factor in bringing about the alleged defects in the party system is the most important growth of political life outside Parliament, which is no longer the focus of all the political activities of the country. The proceedings of trade union congresses may be as significant as those of the House of Commons. The most momentous questions of the hour are investigated by Royal Commissions, whose reports are usually much more significant than parliamentary debates. The relative importance of the electorate as a whole and its representative assembly is altering, the former revealing itself increasingly as a power always, not at election times only. As often as not, when he wishes to make some momentous statement of policy, a minister of the crown addresses himself directly to the electorate in a public political meeting rather than indirectly in Parliament. This tendency which does not mean that Parliament is becoming intrinsically and absolutely less important, but only relatively as regards the electorate, is a healthy sign, betokening the growth of an educated public opinion, and of democratic authority. Lastly, there is the influence of the great extra-parliamentary political organ—the press. Even

from its very early days the press has had an intimate relation with, a very close bearing upon, the status of Parliament, more especially the Lower House. From the day that the newspaper made good its right to report parliamentary debates, parliamentary debates began to decline in importance. Through the newspapers the great outer public could be directly addressed, and there were easier ways to do this than by making speeches in Parliament. It was more effective as well as easier to write letters or articles to the press, or to be interviewed by a reporter. If the member of Parliament could address his constituents through the paper, the process could be reversed and public opinion made more vocal in journals than in Parliament. Thirdly, the press was able not only to reflect, but also to formulate, public opinion. It was able to inform and instruct ; it also had the power to inflame or to hypnotise. The political power of the Fourth Estate has so grown of late years that a controller of newspapers may be as powerful as a Cabinet Minister. The newspaper may be as effective a government-making organ as Parliament.

During the War the constitutional characteristics of the preceding years became intensified. For the urgent requirements of the moment, new departments were created and the army of officialdom enlarged. The need of business methods became more imperative than ever, and a new type of "business" statesman came into prominence.

With such "experts" in the administration, the tendency for the minister to spend his time in his office rather than in Parliament became still more pronounced. They "realised" themselves much more as the directors than as the mere mouthpieces of their departments.

Extremely important changes also took place in the Cabinet. Whereas the tendency prior to the War had been for Cabinets to increase in size, we now had a very small one indeed, a *War-Cabinet*, existing specifically for the direction of war policy, the taking of rapid decisions. What had long been considered one of the most essential features of Cabinet government—the co-ordination of the various departments of state—was dropped altogether. There were two other interesting innovations—the first that one member of the War Cabinet was not a member of Parliament at all, but a minister from one of the Dominions, General Smuts; the second, that the tradition that no notes should be taken of the proceedings of Cabinet meetings (save by the Prime Minister for the information of the King) was broken down, and regular minutes were taken by a secretary.

With the end of the War we have had a return to the old system of a moderately large Cabinet. A sub-committee of the Ministry of Reconstruction, presided over by Lord Haldane, had recommended that, as a permanent arrangement, the Cabinet should not number more than twelve, and preferably ten. But with so many departments of state being of absolutely first-rate importance, it was essential that their heads should be members of the Cabinet.

Other recommendations made by Lord Haldane's committee were interesting as being based upon expert views regarding the lessons of recent experience in connection with our constitutional system—notably the recommendation of a ministry of justice, the more extended employment of women in the Civil Service, and the creation of a distinct ministry of information and research. The suggestion was made that while in every government

department there ought to be better arrangements made for inquiry, research, and reflection, the higher officials being allowed more time for this part of their duties, there should in addition be on the analogy of the Ministry of Reconstruction a permanent department solely engaged in collecting and examining information, not executive at all, but working in close collaboration with the executive branches, and placing the results of its labours at their disposal.

The two most interesting facts in connection with this sub-committee's work are, first, that it should have been appointed at all, and, secondly, its insistence upon the need of research as an integral part of the obligations of government. For here, in the very fact of the appointment and the most significant of the committee's suggestions is, first, the sign of a reaction against the policy of leaving events to take their course haphazard, and, secondly, the idea of endeavouring consciously to shape our ends in accordance with the dictates of knowledge and wisdom. The conception that it is the duty of government not only to administer and to rule, but also to learn, to search for truth is wonderfully pregnant. The policy of employing commissions to investigate facts has been significant in the same direction. It seems as if the complicated conditions of modern times are forcing the realisation that every government, if it is to cope with its tremendously onerous and responsible work, whatever its party complexion, must not allow its policy to be dictated solely by its political preconceptions, its political creed, but must seek impartially to discover the actual facts and the ideally best way in which to deal with them.

If our constitution comes to embody this great

principle, it will have added another distinction of lasting value to its great existing characteristics—the principle of justice as exemplified by the open trial and the rule of law, the principle of self-determination as exemplified by the self-governing dependencies. What we know as our constitution is still full of anomalies and is undoubtedly in all sorts of ways capable of improvement ; but at least it has ever been vital, never mechanically conceived nor drastically cut about by doctrinaires and vandals. Its history has been one of a gradual evolution in accordance with the demands of the generations. It has ever been full of compromise; not theory ; the spirit of conciliation, not of arbitrary authority. Its origins are in our early history, and it is deeply impregnated with all the glamour of our national annals ; it has been won by the struggles of many great men guided by high ideals of public service, and in the pursuit of the attainment of a noble life both for the individual and the state ; it is instinct, despite its defects, with much that is of best report in the spirit of our race.

## CHAPTER XIII

### EDUCATIONAL REFORM IN ENGLAND

THE improvement in our national system of Education had passed beyond the stage of a mere proposal before the return of peace. The Education Act of 1918 was a definite advance, a big stride forward ; it promises the realisation of one of the highest ideals of reconstruction, and the achievement is the greater because the advantages offered are less easily appreciated than those sought in the fields of industry and commerce. The ideal has been often expounded by the minister responsible for the Act. "We must conceive of Education," he has written "as the art of drawing out of a man all that is best and most useful in him so that it may be employed to the advantage of the community and of himself as a member of it. We must regard it not as bearing fruit in the science and art of earning a livelihood alone, but as yielding the science and art of living. It is the means by which the individual citizen may be trained to make the best use of his innate qualities and the means by which the State may be enabled to make the best use of its citizens. Spiritually conceived it is Plato's 'turning of the soul towards the light' ; materially conceived it is Napoleon's 'open career to talent.' In any case it is of great democratic interest, for indeed a wise democratic Government is impossible without it."

The advantages of technical, scientific, and commercial

education are practical ; with them a man is better equipped to earn his own livelihood and to be useful in the economic life of the state ; few would require justification for measures to improve education in these directions. With a form of government constantly becoming more democratic, the need for a good general standard of intelligence and enlightenment on the part of the electorate is almost equally obvious. The community as a whole is slower to realise the value of those forms of education which are the highest of all, which cultivate true taste and love of the beautiful, which share with religion the work of building up character, and which are an unfailing source of happiness to those who can enjoy them. Yet the need for education of this sort will increase as reforms in other directions give the workers more leisure, together with improved earnings which leave greater margin for expenditure on pleasure and recreation. It will depend very largely on their general level of education whether these opportunities will become to them occasions for enjoyment in the best sense and of the most lasting quality, or temptations to amusements at best vapid and unsatisfying, and at worst immoral. Fortunately the efficiency of the education system of the past fifty years has been such as to awaken appreciation for those wider openings aimed at by educational reformers to-day. "I notice also that a new way of thinking about education has sprung up among many of the more reflecting members of our industrial army. They do not want education in order that they may become better workmen and earn higher wages. They do not want it in order that they may rise out of their own class, . . . they want it because they know that, in the treasures of the mind, they can find an aid to good citizenship, a source of pure enjoyment and a

refuge from the necessary hardships of a life spent in the midst of clangling machinery."

The new Education Act builds on the foundation of the system established by the Acts of 1870 and 1902 ; it sets up no new authorities ; it co-ordinates and elaborates existing methods much more than it supersedes them. The Act is therefore only intelligible when the national system of education at the time of its passage through Parliament is understood. This system is divisible into four branches ; there are the three general grades, of elementary education, secondary education and university education, and side by side with the last two, and very closely connected with them, stands technical education. Smaller, but nevertheless very important branches are the training of teachers and the education of special classes such as the physically and mentally defective.

At the beginning of 1918 there was little in the way of elementary education that was not state controlled, and the new Act has brought even that little into the general scheme. A hundred years ago there were a number of privately owned schools scattered up and down the country ; but they had no common system or standard of efficiency. The only systematic efforts were in the hands of the two great pioneer societies, the British and Foreign School Society founded in 1808, followed in 1811 by the National Society representing the Anglican Church. Most of the schools charged small fees. In 1833, by grants to the two leading societies, the State first began to help the cause of education, and in 1856 the Education Department was constituted to administer educational grants from Treasury funds. In 1870 an Act of Parliament was passed which marks the greatest advance in the history of English Education. Its outstanding feature was that it made

elementary education compulsory for all children. This provision could not be carried out by means of the existing schools, and therefore School Boards were constituted by the Act to build, equip, and maintain additional schools in their districts as far as the needs of the population required. For this purpose they had the power to raise revenue by rates. The controlling central authority was the Education Department established fourteen years earlier. Parents were not restricted in their choice of schools, but could send their children to "board schools," "British Schools," "National (Society's) Schools," or private schools, or educate them at home as they liked, so long as they could show that education of a reasonable elementary standard was being provided for them. After 1891, no fees were charged at the board schools. The next step was taken in the Act of 1902 (for London there was a separate act in 1903) which reformed the administration by abolishing the school boards, and raised the general standard of efficiency by bringing the schools of the various religious bodies and educational societies partially under state control. The school boards had been very numerous and many administered very small areas, so that men of great ability were not attracted to membership of these bodies, while their limited scope gave them a narrow view of their work. Under the new system, educational administration was added to the duties of the much more important and efficient county councils and (in the towns) borough councils. These powers, of course, covered elementary education, except that in Urban Districts of a population exceeding 20,000, the urban district council is usually the authority for elementary education. The position of the elementary schools other than board schools which come under the control of the local education

authority was greatly changed. The managers of these schools are still responsible for the provision and upkeep of the school buildings, but the burden of supplying teachers, equipment, and materials falls on the public authorities. These authorities are thus enabled to set the same standard for all elementary schools whether "council schools" or "non-provided" schools, to maintain that standard by inspection, and to secure efficiency in the teaching staff, who are now their salaried servants. The board of managers of each non-provided school consists of representatives of the founders of the school and of the local education authority in the ratio of two to one; council schools also have their boards of managers who secure the due representation of local interests in educational administration and form useful instruments for the supervision of the more minute features of the conduct of the schools. The Act of 1902 was preceded by the reconstruction of the central department as the Board of Education, a powerful state department represented in Parliament by the President, and provided with very great control over local educational administration through its body of inspectors and its authority to give or withhold grants from the national funds in support of local work. The bulk of the revenue of the local education authority is drawn from the Education Rate which it has power to levy on the district it serves. Fees were in most cases abolished even in the non-provided schools, and the Act of 1918 orders that there shall be no fees in any public elementary schools. There is now, therefore, in England a system of free but compulsory elementary education provided by the state and involving all elementary schools except the comparatively few surviving ventures of the "private school" and "preparatory college" type.

Even schools not state-aided may ask for inspections by the Board of Education, and the Board is to be fully acquainted with the nature of all new educational ventures.

There are two extensions of elementary education which have been adopted generally by education authorities. One is the arrangement of central schools (or "higher grade" or "higher elementary" schools) which provide instruction a little more advanced in character than that given in the ordinary elementary schools; a central school exists for a small district containing a number of ordinary schools, and is supplied by these schools with picked pupils who are likely to benefit by the instruction given there; the central school pupil is usually of a quality between that of those who finish their education in the elementary school, and those who proceed, by scholarships or otherwise, to secondary schools. The other extension of elementary training is the system of evening continuation schools, which are much more numerous than central schools; these offer opportunities for continued education to those whose day-time is occupied in earning a livelihood; they have met the needs of those who are unable to carry their education so far as they would wish before leaving school, but they impose no age limit, and therefore are helpful to a certain number of rather older people. Their future importance will be much diminished by the compulsory continuation schools for young people between fourteen and eighteen years of age established by the Act of 1918. Neither the central schools nor the evening continuation schools are intended to form rungs in the "educational ladder," although in the greater cities, where evening instruction is provided by the technical schools and the universities, they often develop a side preparatory to the work of these greater institutions;

essentially they round off the system of elementary education, and are to be regarded as part of it. Both are provided by the local authority responsible for elementary education.

In secondary education a dual system of public and private management exists. The private institutions are secondary and grammar schools, often of considerable antiquity and great efficiency, and possessing their own valuable traditions and atmosphere. They have not been sufficient to meet the needs of a rapidly growing population, especially as the number of scholarships and exhibitions offered by public education authorities renders necessary secondary school accommodation for a much larger proportion of the children of the country than could attend as fee-paying pupils. It has therefore become necessary for the local authorities under powers conferred by the Acts of 1902-3 to provide their own secondary schools in all populous districts. This work is usually in the hands of the County Councils and Borough Councils who are the normal authorities for all higher and technical education. The Board of Education and the local authorities both aid secondary schools, if they desire it and if they satisfy the conditions, the chief of which are a high standard of efficiency ensured by inspection, and the reservation of twenty-five per cent. of the accommodation for free place-holders (that is, for holders of scholarships). Most secondary schools avail themselves of this assistance, although a few, including all the great public schools, prefer to maintain a position of complete independence. The greater part of secondary education in England is, therefore, in some degree under public control ; all secondary schools, whether privately established or provided by the public education authorities, charge

admission fees to pupils other than scholarship-holders ; their pupils may or may not come from the more elementary institutions, public or private, and their leaving standard is usually that of the entrance examinations to the universities, and in the best that of the intermediate examinations for university degrees.

In university education the state plays its least important part. The older universities and the new alike have been subjected to state inquiries as to efficiency, but state aid does not extend far beyond the granting of acts of incorporation and the payment of grants-in-aid.

University Education in Britain a hundred years ago was provided by Oxford and Cambridge, Dublin, and the four Scottish Universities. In 1826 University College, London, was founded to provide a university education for those who felt themselves excluded from Oxford and Cambridge by the religious tests. King's College, London, was founded three years later, and these two colleges are now the principal general institutions of the University of London. The University itself began chiefly as an examining body granting degrees, but it is now a true teaching university of the first rank, into which have been incorporated, in addition to University and King's Colleges, the medical schools of the London hospitals, the important group of science and technical institutions at South Kensington, a number of women's colleges, training schools for clergy and teachers, and the London School of Economics and Political Science. There have been similar movements in the provinces. The Victoria University, consisting of Owens College, Manchester, and similar institutions at Liverpool and Sheffield, has since broken up into the three universities of those cities.

There are now important universities at Birmingham and Leeds and at other provincial towns, as well as numerous "university colleges," "schools of art" and "technical colleges" which aspire to early incorporation as universities, while there has been a great expansion in the work of the University of Wales. Many of these institutions have had time to establish great reputations, to produce brilliant alumni, and there are few of them, however young, that cannot claim scholars of the very first rank as occupants of some of their chairs. These newer universities have placed the highest education within the reach of nearly all who could profit by them. They are none of them state foundations, and have depended mainly on private munificence and fees for their income, but heavy grants are now received from the central and local education authorities. The new Education Act emphasises the fact that local authorities have the right to give such aid but makes no detailed provisions for the further assistance of university education.

Technical education is in much the same position as secondary; the technical schools (including schools of art and schools of commerce) are often private ventures, aided in most cases by grants from central and local funds, paid after inspection for efficiency and on the basis of the amount of instruction given; in other cases the institutions are entirely provided and maintained by the local education authorities, whose powers in regard to technical education rest on the Acts of 1902-3. Evening schools offer classes of a preparatory nature, and the day continuation schools established by the Act of 1918 are to provide some instruction with a technical bias, so that the work of local authorities in this direction is extended by that measure.

In addition to the large number of scholarships and exhibitions offered by unofficial bodies, the local education authorities provide scholarships open to elementary school children and tenable at secondary schools, and others open to secondary school pupils and tenable at institutions of university rank. Such scholarships usually consist of the payment of admission fees for the candidate, together with a grant to help towards the cost of maintenance during the period which is being devoted to education instead of to money-earning employment. As a result a number of young men and women every year graduate at the universities who without assistance could not have proceeded beyond the elementary schools, and a much larger number in similar circumstances complete a full course of secondary school education.

The general character of the training of elementary school teachers is entirely controlled by the Board of Education, which has fixed a common standard of attainment for the whole country as the qualification for a fully trained teacher. The training colleges are very largely religious foundations, but are being rapidly supplemented by others built, equipped and maintained by county councils. These authorities also assist candidates for the profession of elementary school teacher by scholarships before the training college stage, which carry with them a monetary grant, initiation into the art of teaching by practical work in elementary schools, and free places and academic instruction in secondary schools. At the training colleges owned by the public authorities there is usually a substantial proportion of the accommodation devoted to free places.

Local elementary education authorities provide schools also for the physically and mentally defective, and the

County Councils are responsible for industrial schools for the educational and disciplinary training of children convicted of crime.

The Board of Education exercises a considerable measure of control over the local authorities, who receive large grants from the central authority for efficient work, the schools being subject to frequent inspection by a large staff of government inspectors (His Majesty's Inspectors of Schools). As in all other branches of local government, the accounts of education authorities are subject to central audit.

The main revenues of local education authorities are raised by the levy of rates on the property within the areas of their jurisdiction.

The organisation founded in 1870 and extended in 1902-3, embraces all types of education and, except perhaps in the case of university education, controls and assists them all with no small degree of efficiency ; nevertheless weak places have been revealed by experience, and the Act of 1918 sets out to strengthen these, and “to provide, under the better organisation of the existing machinery—amended it may be in some directions, and extended in others—enlarged and enriched opportunities of education to the children of the poor.”

The most serious charge to which the system of elementary education was open, was that training did not last long enough. The careful application of the principles of psychology had suggested better ways of organising education both in its broad outlines and in the details of teaching methods. In the former field, it was proclaimed that the age at which the mind is fitted to begin specialisation is that of adolescence, which begins just when, under the earlier education Acts, the child is allowed to leave

school. Even among children who are not likely to go far in the department of learning, it is desirable that some little specialised teaching should follow at once on the general training of the elementary school. The normal leaving age of fourteen, itself too low, was further reduced by the statutory permission for withdrawal at the age of thirteen if a moderate standard of attainment were shown, and by the half-time system which allowed of the closing years of the child's school life being invaded by remunerated work to the extent of half his day. These opportunities were always widely utilised in some parts of the country, but the demand for labour and the lure of high wages during the war resulted in much more widespread advantage being taken of them, so that by the summer of 1917 six hundred thousand children had been withdrawn prematurely from school, earning wages for a short time which however good, could never compensate for the disability of inferior education which in most cases will remain with them throughout their lives. The Act of 1918 deals in a drastic manner with the evil, by fixing fourteen years as the minimum age at which full-time school attendance may cease; local authorities have it in their discretion to raise this minimum to fifteen years. Children are to commence attendance at the age of five years, or under certain conditions, at the age of six. At the same time the companion evil of employment out of school hours is attacked; it has been customary both before and after school hours to put children to tiring work for the sake of the small wage they earn, so that their health and physique were seriously reduced, while in school they were quite unfit to benefit by the instruction offered. It is now unlawful to employ children under twelve years of age at all, or children between twelve and the school-leaving age

until after school hours (with the exception that a local authority may in special cases allow employment for not more than one hour before nine in the morning). They may never work before six o'clock in the morning or after eight o'clock at night, or for more than two hours on Sunday.

The Act goes further than securing that children shall not be exploited during the first fourteen years of their life in the interests of industry ; it makes rules which will ultimately amount to an enforcement of full-time attendance at school till the age of sixteen or, alternatively, to compulsory part-time attendance between the ages of fourteen and eighteen. Local education authorities are responsible for the establishment of a sufficient number of properly organised continuation schools, to meet the requirements of the young people of their area ; and in order that this system may be as complete as possible they are to work in conjunction with neighbouring authorities and even to seek the aid of universities for the provision of useful lectures, while there are to be no such fees as would exclude any boys and girls who would be capable of benefiting by the instruction given. Since these schools are for the education of those who are at the age when specialisation should commence, they must offer at least elementary instruction in all branches of science, technology, art and the humanities for which there may be a demand. They undertake the training of young people at the stage when it is necessary to recognise differences of bent, capabilities in various fields of knowledge, and it is an aim of the state in providing these schools " that every child in the country should receive the form of education most adapted to fashion its qualities to the highest use." In directing, controlling, and if

necessary enforcing, the provision of an adequate and properly co-ordinated system of continuation schools in all parts of the country the Board of Education is to play a prominent part.

It was from the first the intention of the government that part-time attendance at these continuation schools should be compulsory, but this part of the measure met with opposition during its passage through Parliament. It was urged that industry would suffer from the diminution and disorganisation of labour, and that it was difficult for poor parents to maintain their children at school even for part-time, for so many years. It was a short-sighted objection which sought to hinder the industrial efficiency, earning capacity, happiness, strength of character and worthy citizenship of a lifetime in order that four years of that life might be devoted to unskilled or half-skilled labour paid at a low rate; the improved education was to be the ultimate benefit of the child, the employer, and the state alike. The difficulty was met by a compromise by which the compulsory age for the first seven years of the operation of the Act is reduced to sixteen years. After that the age will be raised to eighteen years for part-time attendance; withdrawal at sixteen years will only be allowed if the individual has been in full-time attendance up to that age at a school recognised by the Board of Education as efficient, or has obtained the matriculation certificate of a university. Since a matriculation certificate is seldom obtained at so early an age without full-time preparation at a secondary school, the only alternative, in most cases, to part-time education up to the age of eighteen is to be full-time education up to the age of sixteen. The hours of compulsory attendance at continuation schools are to be three hundred and twenty

a year (equal to eight hours a week for forty weeks a year) except that during the first seven years of the operation of the Act local authorities have it at their discretion to reduce the time to two hundred and eighty hours a year (seven hours a week). For the purpose of attending the continuation schools the pupils must be released by their employers for the time of their instruction and for a sufficient margin of time before and after it to allow them to wash and obtain necessary meals, and pupils cannot be compelled to attend continuation schools connected with their place of employment. Employers who hinder the attendance of pupils, and pupils who absent themselves, are alike liable to penalties at law. There is nothing to prevent a child remaining at the elementary school for full time after the age of fourteen, although only eight (or seven) hours is compulsory. To meet such cases, local education authorities are instructed to provide more advanced teaching at elementary schools and to make all necessary additional provision of central schools, as well as to extend all elementary education on the practical side.

More than ever before, the state by the Act of 1918 makes itself responsible for the physical well-being of the children and associates this closely with education. Not only does it forbid the strain of overwork due to employment at too early an age, either for whole or part time, and to tiring work outside school hours, but it also absolutely forbids child labour in very wide spheres of industrial activity; children under fourteen years of age may not be employed in factories, workshops, coal-mines, metalliferous mines, or quarries, so that even during the restricted hours when a school-child may work he is saved from any work which is to be done at high speed and from most work of a heavy or dangerous character. As a

further safeguard the local education authority is given power to forbid a child to continue in an injurious occupation, and may collect information from parents and employers or by means of its school medical officers to assist it in this. In the continuation schools, physical training is to form a definite part of the programme and local authorities are authorised to provide gymnasiums, playing fields, swimming baths, and similar facilities and even to arrange holiday camps. In elementary schools, local education authorities are accustomed to care for the health of the children in their charge, especially in respect to physical cleanliness, dental troubles, and defective vision, and for this purpose they employ staffs of school medical officers, qualified practitioners, who inspect, report, and give treatment regularly and systematically. This duty is imposed by the Acts of 1902-3 and is extended by the Act of 1918 to apply to all provided schools, continuation schools and secondary schools as well as elementary. Infant care becomes part of the educational scheme under the last Act, and local education authorities may provide nursery schools for children between two and five years of age (or six years if the local authority raises the age for beginning school attendance to six) where attention will be given to their health, nourishment, and physical welfare. This, like so many other provisions of the new Act, is but an extended application of an existing practice, for it has been part of the work of local education authorities for a good many years to provide meals for underfed children. It is realised that a child can profit little by education if it is hampered by poor physique or imperfect health, or lacks sufficient nourishment.

In all local educational administration narrow parochialism is to disappear; where a large area proves

advantageous for dealing with any matter, local authorities are authorised to act together, and wherever necessary neighbouring authorities are to consult each other. The outstanding aim of the Act of 1918 is to secure co-ordination; so that all needs shall be met everywhere, and so that there shall be no bar to the advancement of a capable child to the full limit of its powers. The first section of the Act deserves quotation:—“With a view to the establishment of a national system of public education available for all persons capable of profiting thereby, it shall be the duty of the council of every county and county borough, so far as their powers extend, to contribute thereto by providing for the progressive development and the comprehensive organisation of education in respect of their area, and with that object any such council may from time to time, and shall when required by the Board of Education, submit to the Board schemes showing the mode in which their duties and powers under the Education Acts are to be performed and exercised, whether separately or in co-operation with other authorities.”

Such a policy of “comprehensive organisation” is expected to do much to remedy the defects in the system of secondary school education. The geographical distribution of secondary schools is unsuited to present-day requirements. Many of them are foundations of centuries ago, when the areas of densest population were not in the places they have occupied since the Industrial Revolution. It follows that many a once prosperous place, now a sleepy country town, is well supplied with secondary schools, while there are new districts where such schools have not been supplied nearly so rapidly as the rate of increase of population has required. A first duty of the councils, therefore, is to provide additional secondary

schools where the supply is insufficient. Another difficulty is peculiar to rural areas. The secondary schools may be equal in respect of accommodation to the requirements of the area even with a liberal bestowal of free places and scholarships on capable pupils of elementary schools, but they are not easily accessible. The local authorities are empowered by the new Act to meet this difficulty ; their power to give scholarships and maintenance allowances, which among other expenses would help meet those of travelling, is reiterated, and they can even provide board and lodging at or near the secondary school for scholars from more distant homes.

The provisions as to advanced education and research take the form of power to give grants in aid to the educational institutions concerned.

A policy of more liberal Treasury grants in aid of education preceded the new Act by a year, but the Act assures its continuance by imposing on the central funds the duty of meeting half the expenditure of the local authorities on works of elementary or other education which, under the regulations of the Board of Education, can be aided at all by grants. The principle underlying this is vital. It recognises in a degree never attained before, that sound education is of national importance. The foundation of the revenue of local education authorities is nevertheless still the education rate. The amount which might be levied for education other than elementary has hitherto been limited to the yield of a rate of twopence in the pound ; but all limit is now removed.

But the extended system of national education now to be applied will make a demand other than that for increased expenditure ; the whole machine would be brought to a standstill without a sufficient supply of

teachers, for they are the first essential of any educational work. Here indeed has arisen a serious problem, for the shortage of teachers even for the requirements of the Acts of 1902-3 had long been causing serious alarm. The number of candidates for the profession of elementary school teacher had been falling for ten years, and this was particularly true of male candidates, whose numbers, even in the case of one very big and important authority, had become almost negligible. The root of the trouble was the low rate of remuneration offered to qualified teachers. The course of training of an elementary school teacher is a long one, and the certificate of the Board of Education necessary for obtaining a post as a fully trained teacher cannot be obtained before the age of twenty. Commencing salaries were low, and maxima not liberal. The average salaries for the whole country were only £176 per annum for head masters of elementary schools, and £126 per annum for head mistresses, while their certificated assistants received, on an average £129 and £95 per annum respectively. Seeing that the large towns paid very much better rates than these, it follows that the rates in some rural districts were very much lower; indeed many a man settling in a village school has had to resign himself as contentedly as he could to a salary never reaching £100 per year. While an annual renewal of the elementary teaching staff of England requires 9000 new entrants to the profession in each year, that figure had not been reached since 1906, and by 1912 had fallen to 5232, the falling off being at least three times as great in the case of men as in that of women. During all this period of decreasing entries efforts were being made to render the training period more attractive; aided by Treasury grants the value of scholarships for intending

teachers was increased, but this caused very small additions to the number of candidates, and these were often of inferior capacity, so that even the small increase in entrants was very much thinned by failures at various stages in the course of training. It remained for Mr. Fisher, President of the Board of Education, to tell the House of Commons in 1917 what had been obvious for years to all engaged in administering the system, namely, that no amount of assistance in training would attract good material in sufficient quantities to a vocation offering such poor ultimate prospects. He asked for and obtained a largely increased vote on account of education, which has enabled the Board to assist local authorities, while giving even better assistance during the period of training, to offer increased salaries to elementary school teachers, as well as to that able body of workers, nearly all university graduates, who had been devoting their lives to secondary school teaching on terms little, if any, better than those offered to their humbler brethren. This liberal policy is sealed, as has already been shown, by the Act of 1918, and there have since been a series of arbitration awards giving liberal advances in salary to teachers to meet the new general level of prices.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE INTELLECTUAL ACHIEVEMENT OF THE PAST CENTURY

THE history of literature is largely one of action and reaction. An original genius breathes an inspiration which produces imitators, and so a literary movement, a mode or school is formed. After a while the initial inspiration fades away and all trace of originality disappears, the mode degenerates into a bad habit, the style into a mannerism. Then comes the reaction, an outcry for greater naturalness and simplicity and sincerity. The so-called "Augustan age" of English Literature in the eighteenth century was such a reaction against the forced conceits and affected obscurities which disfigure our literature in the first half of the seventeenth century when once the inspiration of the great Elizabethans had passed away. Similarly the Romantic movement, which ushered in the nineteenth century, was a reaction against the artificiality of the eighteenth century whose studied simplicity had become as much a mannerism as the wilful obscurities of the metaphysical poets, against which it had reacted. It had been a great age of "sublime common sense"—this age of Dr. Johnson—of much solid learning, of much purity and distinction of style. But it had been a ponderous age, very unimaginative; an age of wit, not of humour; of reason, not of fancy. And Pope, enunciating the typical doctrine of his time,

“ the proper study of mankind is man,” had left out not only nearly all that was not man but a great deal of man too. For the view that Pope, his contemporaries and followers, took of human nature was superficial. Their meaning is always as clear as crystal, but then they never saw very deep.

The Romantic movement was ushered in by the French Revolution with its impatience of the existing order, its stormy energy, its overwhelming enthusiasm.<sup>1</sup> The placid correctness and staid pomposity of the previous age were swept away. All the ardour of emancipation, the joy in licence is in the really characteristic and therefore valuable poems of Burns and Byron; as the breaking away from the studied and polished formality of the eighteenth century is seen in the magnificent use of his vernacular by Burns and in the simplicity of diction in Wordsworth.

There is a new simplicity, but also a new profundity; with simplicity of language goes profundity of thought and depth of feeling. The facile generalisations, the flippant satires, the sonorous platitudes of the eighteenth century mode are gone. There is a search for something much less obvious, something infinitely bigger. We see this most plainly in the new attitude to Beauty. The previous epoch had been curiously insensible to what we have since the romantic movement come to think of as the most sublime beauty. Its taste, we would now say bluntly, was thoroughly bad. Its sculpture and a great deal of its architecture was dull and heavy and often ugly—for example the hideous statuary that it erected to the disfigurement of the nave of Westminster Abbey. It was very little interested in the beauty of nature. The

<sup>1</sup> Produced by, it was yet in part in reaction against, the Revolution.

type of scenery which pleased it was mild and placid and rather flat ; it liked an expansive unexciting prospect. The scenery that appealed to its poets was such as that of *The Deserted Village* or Gray's *Elegy*. Order and trimness were demanded, such as one gets in a tidily kept garden, with tidily mown lawns, tidily clipped hedges, carefully laid out flower beds and well-conducted trees, box trees for preference. Wild and luxuriant nature, uncontrolled by man, did not please, and mountains were " horrid protuberances " that obstructed the view. The Romantic poets on the other hand—Wordsworth, Scott, Shelley, Keats—found their inspiration in such scenery as that of the Scottish Highlands, the English Lakes and Snowdonia. It was precisely its freedom from the hand and shaping of man that they valued—and its grandeur, its power to awe, to thrill. Through their delight in such scenery the romantic poets brought in a quality of which there is no trace in the century before them, that of ecstasy. But their enjoyment was not simply sensuous. It was partly intellectual. Nature had a tremendous meaning. There was a subtle and a wonderful connection between external nature and the spirit of man. There was divinity in both. Pantheism is the religion of the Lake poets and of Shelley. It pervades all that Wordsworth ever wrote ; it is most wonderfully expressed in Shelley's *Hymn to Intellectual Beauty*.

Imaginative contemplation of nature issuing in transcendentalism is apt to produce another interest—a mystic interest in the *super-natural*. In greater or less degree this interest is exemplified in all the great poets of the movement. They probe beyond the world of the senses, of ordinary human experience, and contemplate immortality and that mysterious border-world which we

have come to term psychical. In Coleridge this tendency is most marked—in the weirdness of the uncanny dream-land of *The Ancient Mariner*, *Kubla Khan*, and above all, in the first part of *Christabel*. But it is only less apparent in Wordsworth's *Ode to Immortality*, Shelley's *Adonais*, Scott's *Proud Maisie*, and Keats' *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* and *Lamia*.

Another essential characteristic of these writers, inspired as they were by the enthusiasm of the Revolution, is their passionate devotion to Liberty—conceived as no mere absence of restraint, but as the crying need of the human soul, its natural right, its noblest privilege, its legitimate fulfilment. Hatred of inertia, wrong, repression is fierce and burning in the early poems of Wordsworth (until he became alarmed by the excesses in France), in all Byron, Burns, and Shelley. George III. and his ministers, especially Castlereagh, are lashed unmercifully in *The Vision of Judgment* and *The Masque of Anarchy* and many other of these authors' shorter poems. The spirit of revolt is in this literature—of revolt against not only political repression, but whatever else curbs or enchains the human spirit, against convention, tradition, obscurantism, religious or secular, and the censorious piety of the “unco' guid.” Much of the best in Byron and nearly all the best in Burns is directed against such restraints as these. For it is a mark of most literature that is full of an impetuous vitality that it will acknowledge the legality of no barriers, trespass on all preserves, seek out all secret places, so that nothing may be hid. These spirits must see and feel for themselves, form their own judgments, accepting no hearsay evidence, impelled to penetrate to the heart of things, to tear apart all integuments and see their stark uncovered reality. Their

art therefore is sensuous, sensationalist, and all the elemental delights of the artist are in it—colour and sound and movement. And these elemental things, conceived freshly, seized upon by an eager imagination, give to the medium in which they are being expressed something of their own power and beauty. Out of the abundance of their hearts these poets speak—as in the sonorous grandeur of Wordsworth's Sonnets, the mellow richness of Keats' *Ode to Autumn*, the tumultuous eloquence of Shelley's *Ode to the West Wind*.

Another marked feature of the Romantic movement was its interest in history. Any imaginative interest in human nature must always tend to create an interest in man's past. What men are to-day they are because of what they were yesterday; they, unconsciously perhaps, yet very truly, proclaim in their characters and their actions, the record of their previous story. That story is no dry-as-dust chronicle, buried away in state papers and forgotten family archives—it is a living sentient thing, a vigorous life-producing force. One of the most wonderful achievements of the romantic movement was the Waverley Novels. They may not always be strictly accurate; but the past lived and glowed in the author's imagination, and he has caused it so to be enkindled in the minds of myriads of readers.

Interest in history had a very significant offshoot; it produced a type of criticism very different from that of the previous age. That criticism had been very precise and dogmatic, postulating certain canons of correct judgment and approving or condemning in accordance with such inelastic rules. It was thoroughly academic and rigid and unemotional. The new criticism of Hazlitt, Coleridge, De Quincey, and W. S. Landor, on the

other hand, was catholic, appreciative, willing to wax enthusiastic in a way which to their predecessors would have seemed indecorous, unfitting for the sober impartial dignity of the literary judge. And their method was wholly different. Eschewing the system of trying everything by certain set formulae and dismissing it summarily as either good or bad, they set themselves to discover literary origins and tendencies and essay to judge literature not only in accordance with the taste of one generation, their own, but in accordance with the service it had rendered its own generation, realising that there is evolution in literature and that types of thought and styles of expression must change to suit the changing needs of successive epochs, if literature is to have life and creative force in it.

The Romantic movement—in which the chief figures had for the most part passed away before 1830—is the parent of the literature of the Victorian age. In the height of its achievement it has only one rival among the epochs of our national history, that which we loosely term Elizabethan ; and in wealth of production, width of range and variety of type it has no rival in our own history, or that of any other country. The spirit of youthful vigour and enthusiasm, freedom and freshness which was in the romantic movement was the source of the greatness of the Victorian literature ; and many of the writers of the latter period were directly inspired and influenced by the great writers of the beginning of the century. But in the later period something is added, which was lacking in the romantic movement itself. In the first place, the extraordinary breadth of outlook, many-sidedness of interest and multiplicity of form first referred to, which are a reflection of the immense diversity and

complexity of the age itself ; in the second place, a greatly increased interest in the world of ordinary humanity. In the literature of the Romantic school, man had been subordinated to nature ; the Victorians were most of all interested in man, but they treated him not in the bald, matter-of-fact, somewhat superficial way of the eighteenth century, but romantically, seeing in the affairs even of the most commonplace man and woman not a colourless drab, but something that was arresting, important and even exciting. In nineteenth-century imaginative literature the aggregate is not regarded simply as a chance collection of many component parts, all much of a muchness ; the aggregate is individualised ; the ordinary person is revealed as an intensely interesting person—perhaps just because he is not the exception but the rule, *more* important, *more* significant and *more* interesting than the exceptional hero or genius. As the period lengthens, more and more psychology comes into vogue and the probing into the mind and heart of the ordinary man, his motives, thoughts and passions, is felt to be the most absorbing of studies.

This intense interest in the common human world is exhibited in another way. Literature has a very strong practical tendency. In addition to imaginative literature there is a great deal devoted to the most practical subjects—questions of business, economics, industry, politics—in a vast profusion. Such writings are not simply treatises without grace or distinction or style ; they are often genuine literature.

Analogous to this, derivative from it, was the whole-hearted earnestness displayed in political and social problems. The Victorians were able to realise their age as an age, to regard it objectively, take pride in the

splendour of its accomplishment, its great discoveries and inventions, its enormous scientific, mechanical, medical, industrial and commercial advance. They took a great pride in it, and persuaded by the evidence all around them of the reality of progress, they were full of conviction and certitude and were inspired by a sense of mission, as also by a sense of obligation, to do away with what was evil, unworthy of the greatness of their age. So with great zeal they turned their attention to questions of industrial reorganisation and social reformation. This tendency is seen not only in the writings of the professed economists, the Benthamites, the socialists ; but in those of the "man of letters" as such. The social questions of their own day form a large part of the material of the thought of Carlyle and Ruskin. The reforming zeal is seen very clearly in the novel—most notably in Dickens, but also in Charles Reade and Charles Kingsley and such a lesser light as Wilkie Collins, who was genuinely interested in the amendment of unjust laws as well as in the weaving of intricate plots.

Not even the novel is regarded as a vehicle simply for entertainment ; it has a high serious purpose—should be sincere, truthful, containing some criticism of life, if possible utilised in order to aid practical reform. Such is the conception, not of course of all or most, but of many of the best novelists of the era and a large section of its reading public. The quality of "high seriousness" is a most marked feature of the Victorian Literature as a whole. A considerable amount of it is concerned with the discussion of the most momentous questions of human life, of man's place in the universe, the deepest problems of science, of philosophy, of religion. A great literature of its own is centred round the fundamental conception

of evolution, in the *Synthetic Philosophy* of Herbert Spencer and Darwin's *Origin of Species*, the works of Alfred Russel Wallace, Tyndall, Huxley, Clifford and Charles Lyell. The great religious ferments of the century each provided its own literature. While the broad-church evangelicals gave us Kingsley and Frederick Denison Maurice, the Oxford Counter-Reformation movement produced the beautiful hymns of Keble and the superb prose of Newman's *Apologia pro vita sua*, and indeed all his works. We may here add mention of the literature produced by the critics of authority, the agnostics and sceptics or the "higher critics" within the Church, in such works as Seeley's *Ecce Homo*, Winwood Reade's *The Martyrdom of Man*, Cotter Morison's *The Service of Man*, Leslie Stephen's *Agnostic's Apology* and other essays, Lord Morley's studies of Voltaire and the other philosophers of the Revolution, Lecky's *History of Rationalism*, and the volume by Jowett and other liberal churchmen known as *Essays and Reviews*.

Variety and profusion, human interest, practical intention, and high seriousness—these may be accepted as the clearest characteristics of the best parts of Victorian Literature. It is not possible to do more than simply indicate these qualities; so also in drawing attention to the abundance of type, the wealth of the production, only a few suggestions can be made.

In poetry, although there are no names of quite the same eminence as those of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, and Keats, there are two which fall only just short—those of Tennyson and Browning. The former, by far the most popular, must also be accounted the representative poet of his age. His earliest work contains much that is of his best—*Enone*, *The Lotus Eaters*, *Ulysses*,

*Locksley Hall* and the *Morte d'Arthur*. It is doubtful if he ever afterwards surpassed this achievement, though these poems were published at the latest in 1842 and he lived to 1892, though he equalled it in the wonderful lyrics of *The Princess* and *Maud* and such detached lyrics as the famous *Break, break, break, Crossing the Bar* and in *Tithonus*. There is at present a reaction against Tennyson because it is felt that his thought was never very deep—not even in *In Memoriam*, his most ambitious essay in philosophy—that he is too smooth and even, that though there is passion in him it is too flowing, too well conducted. His extraordinary power as a versifier has rather prejudiced him in the eyes of a later generation. It is felt, too, that his point of view is often commonplace, even vulgar. He misses true romance because he is too well mannered, too purely gentlemanly—gentlemanly to the verge of primness. The *Idylls of the King* suffers very badly from this lack of rugged strength and barbarity, from the fact that the atmosphere is all of the nineteenth century, never for a moment of early Briton, or even of Malory. Tennyson, too, suffers from his preoccupation with the problems of his own day; his poems dealing with contemporary events—save for his *Ode to the Duke of Wellington*—are nearly all of poor quality. In particular *Maud*, apart from its lyrics, is a gloomy and bilious production.

Just because his verse was not at all smooth, but very restless, because his thought was not well ordered, but disjointed and most bewildering in its rapidity, because of his unchastened spontaneity, Browning pleases the modern age more than Tennyson. His passion appeals because it is too intense to be mellifluous. People who are deeply stirred may occasionally be eloquent—even so

they rarely use perfect English—more often their utterance is broken. Passion in Browning is always life-like, and intense emotion in real life is always akin to poetry. Browning, one of the greatest of lovers, was a great writer of lyrics, and if they have not the exquisite finish of Tennyson's, such verses as *Love among the Ruins*, *A Woman's Last Word*, *Prospice* have as great a beauty of their own. But more typical of Browning—his great contribution to English poetry—is the dramatic element in his work. His method is intensely psychological. Here he is more modern than Tennyson. His psychology involved him in obscurity—and it is merely absurd to deny the obscurity—though on the other hand it ought to be remembered that in some apparently lucid passages of *In Memoriam*, there is as much genuine obscurity as anywhere in Browning. In his *Men and Women*, whose souls he profoundly understood, in his *Rabbi Ben Ezra*, *Cleon*, *Pippa*, *Fra Lippo Lippi*, *Bishop Blougram*, *Sludge*, the characters in *The Ring and The Book*, Browning produced a gallery of living portraiture quite beyond the powers of a Tennyson. And he has, that of which Tennyson was so devoid, the historic sense. The Italy of the Renaissance was as real to him as that of his own day, which he knew so well. The message of Browning, for his own day, is one for all time. It is optimism, but not the facile optimism of thoughtlessness, it is the optimism of battle, of effort, of manhood, of courage.

On a lower plane than Tennyson and Browning, yet of poets of a very high order Matthew Arnold—whose genius reached its high-water mark in *Thyrsis*, *The Scholar Gypsy*, and *Rugby Chapel*—the two great women poets, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, whose *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, *The Great God Pan*, *The Romaunt of*

*Margret*, and *Cowper's Grave* and several other poems are of singular beauty, and Christina Rossetti, who wrote such exquisite things as *When I am Dead, my Dearest* and *Sleep at Sea*; her brother Dante Gabriel, a great master of the sonnet as in *The House of Life* and of the ballad in *Rose May* and *Troy Town*, and the familiar *The Blessed Damozel*; William Morris with his three great works, *The Defence of Guenevere*, *The Life and Death of Jason*, and *The Earthly Paradise*. Later came the startling genius of Swinburne, with a power of sensuous beauty of language which surpassed Tennyson's and a rebelliousness of thought greater than Shelley's. Marred chiefly by the very monotony of their richness and by a certain splenetic shrillness in the note of their defiance are the numerous volumes, starting with *Songs before Sunrise* and *Atalanta in Calydon* down to *A Channel Passage*. Last of the great Victorian poets came Hardy and Meredith, whose claim to fame as poet as well as novelist is securely based at all events on *Love in a Valley* and *Modern Love*. It is sufficient merely to mention the lesser names of Clough, O'Shaughnessy, Coventry Patmore.

The prose of the Victorians may be grouped under three heads—criticism, history, the novel. The criticism is not almost entirely literary as that of Hazlitt and his contemporaries. Carlyle was mainly a critic of society; Ruskin criticised most things omnivorously, though the most notable part of his work, in *Modern Painters*, *Stones of Venice*, and *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, was art criticism. The two other great art critics were J. A. Symonds, historian of the Italian Renaissance, and Walter Pater, who in *The Renaissance*, *Imaginary Portraits* as well as in *Marius the Epicurean* revealed one of the most ornate styles in our literature. The chief of the

purely literary critics was Matthew Arnold, but outstanding work has been done by many others from Leslie Stephen, Walter Bagehot, and Stopford Brooke down to Mr. W. J. Courthope and Professor A. C. Bradley.

Many conflicting ideals of the historical art and science are exemplified among the historians of the century, some of them great figures in our literature because of their sheer literary power apart from their subject, others scarcely belonging to the sphere of literature at all. In the earlier decades the great names are those of Sir William Napier, the extraordinarily vivid historian of the Peninsular War; Henry Hallam, whose books, tinctured by Whiggish bias as they are, are the best exemplifications of the scientific method before the school of scientific historians had properly started; Grote, perhaps radical first and historian afterwards, who brought contemporary British politics into discussions of the Athens of Pericles; Thirlwall, rather more correct but far less interesting; Henry Milman, whose *History of Latin Christianity* was a work of immense erudition.

Greater than any of these—both as men of letters and historians also—were Macaulay and Froude. They were great because of their gift of imagination and the brilliance of their style. Their appeal was not so much to the scholar as to a much larger public which found in the *History* and *Essays* of the former, the *History* and *Short Studies* of the latter the same sort of pleasure they derived from the Waverley Novels. It was not long before they became the targets for attack on the grounds of their alleged bias and inaccuracy. Both *were* strongly biased, Macaulay as a Whig, Froude as a Protestant; they *were* both at times inaccurate. But often they were suspected for no better reason than because they were picturesque, just as

Freeman was often trusted just because he was dull, whereas in fact he was no less fallible than Froude, whom he so savagely attacked. Very pedantic, lacking in a sense of humour and therefore of proportion, violent in controversy, much of his writing vitiated by the falseness of a fundamental theory in which he devoutly believed but which is now generally recognised as only half true, his history is still the work of a most erudite and a most painstaking and conscientious scholar. Considerably influenced by Freeman's Teutonic theory and perhaps at times too rhetorical, in places biased, J. R. Green's *Short History of the English People* remains the most popular, as it is much the most picturesque and brilliant brief history of England. Like the works of Macaulay and Froude it appeals to the imagination and makes the human figures and the events of the past to live and glow. The power to re-create, to vitalise the past is the greatest gift a historian can possess. It is because he possessed that power pre-eminently in addition to the immense patience in research which he used to good purpose in *The Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell* and to poor purpose in his *History of Frederick the Great* that we have to include Carlyle among the great historians of the century.

The scientific school of historians of the Victorian era includes Bishop Stubbs, whose *Constitutional History* is one of the greatest monuments of English historical scholarship and save in smaller detail has been scarcely shaken at all by more recent research, Kemble, Palgrave, Seebohm, J. H. Round, mainly interested in the earlier periods of our history, Lecky the historian of the eighteenth century both in Great Britain and Ireland as well as of "European Morals" and "Rationalism," above all

S. R. Gardiner, whose industry, learning, accuracy and impartiality were all equally remarkable. Perhaps the three most outstanding of our most recent historians have been Gardiner's successor, Professor Firth, the very brilliant F. W. Maitland and the great Russian scholar Sir Paul Vinogradoff. There may have been a tendency a few years back, under the German influence to lay undue weight upon research for its own sake. But German had already been exchanged for French influence before the War, and, while still fully recognising the necessity for the most painstaking search for, and investigation of original authorities, this laid the chief emphasis upon the use made of research, the skill of the synthesis, the penetration of the analysis, the lucid exposition, eloquent interpretation, from which not only the scholar but the untrained reader may learn and benefit.

No *résumé*, however concise, of the historical work of the century, should omit to make at least a reference to the great achievement in bringing ancient history to light of the excavators, the archaeologists—the work done in Greece, as by Mr. A. J. Evans at Cnossos, by Dr. Flinders Petrie in Egypt, Professor Sayce in Asia Minor. The ancient civilisations of Troy, Mycenae, of the Pharaohs and of Nineveh have literally been unearthed.

We come to the novel. It is a vast subject, for prose fiction has been to the nineteenth century what the poetic drama was to the Elizabethan age. It has had an amazing popularity and influence; the scale of production has been enormous and the variety of type has been as extensive as the tastes and interests of the public who have surrendered themselves to its fascination. There has been the historical novel, initiated by Scott, carried on by Bulwer Lytton, Ainsworth, Blackmore, Charles Kingsley, Thackeray;

the political novel of Disraeli ; the novel of vagrancy in Borrow ; the novel of provincial life, of Scotland as in Scott, in Susan Ferrier, in John Galt and R. L. Stevenson ; of Ireland as in Maria Edgeworth and Samuel Lever ; of the cathedral town as in Anthony Trollope, of the Midlands as in George Eliot, and of Wessex as in Thomas Hardy ; the romance of satire, whose exponent was Thomas Love Peacock ; the yarn of the sea as written by Captain Marryat, Michael Scott, Clark Russell ; the religious didactic tales of Charlotte M. Yonge ; the evangelical novel in Kingsley ; the sporting novel of Whyte Melville ; the story all plot and mystery brought to a fine art by Wilkie Collins ; philosophical romance in J. M. Short-house ; philosophy in George Eliot and George Meredith ; the novel of the Industrial Revolution in Northern England in Mrs. Gaskell ; of the underworld in George Gissing ; of the army, India, the empire, the life of the Englishman in distant parts of the earth in Rudyard Kipling and Joseph Conrad.

The traditions of the English novel were fixed by four supremely great writers, Defoe, Fielding, Scott, and Jane Austen. Perhaps their characteristics may be summed up as follows, although not each quality is to be found necessarily in all four—breadth of view, but simplicity in means and construction ; a keen interest in human character, which may be critical and at times sarcastic, but is always friendly, never malevolent ; the divine gift of humour ; the equally great gift of expression which we call style ; and withal sanity, manliness and a moral judgment. That moral judgment was never narrow and mawkish, or the author of *Jonathan Wild* and *Tom Jones* could not have been included here. But the moral standpoint is always there, for the greatest of English

novelists have never been attracted by the prattle of art for art's sake and have never been neutrals between right and wrong, better and worse, in human conduct.

These high qualities are exemplified in the prose fiction of the Victorian era as a whole. They are pre-eminently in the two novelists who stand in relation to the rest as Browning and Tennyson among the poets. The greatness of Dickens lies in his amazing vitality, the extraordinary richness and vividness of his imagination, his great dramatic power, particularity in describing the terrible and the grotesque, but still more in his glorious gift of the kindest humour, his unrivalled capacity of imparting to the everyday life of London a quality of glamour, excitement, in a word romance, and the depth of his charity for the oppressed, the weak in body and in mind, and for little children. In comparison with these high qualities his defects, and he had many, pale into insignificance—his tendency to mere caricature, the extreme badness of much of his intended pathos, the badness of much of his style.

Thackeray had a less brilliant imagination than Dickens and he could be prolix, tiresomely didactic, and dull. But he had an even greater range than Dickens, a more extensive social range at all events, and as large a variety of types. This produces in his books an epic quality—he had derived it from Fielding—which gives to the reader the impression that he is looking not at a specialist's portrait but at the whole breadth of real life itself. This is true realism—though the picture is never for a moment detached, one is conscious of the showman-author all the time, perhaps too conscious. But the author's spirit, brooding over his works, is the essence of their reality—large-hearted, beneficent, tender. In his earlier days

Thackeray was occasionally in expression cynical, but he was too much of a sentimentalist to be a cynic, and he had infinitely too great a sense of humour, too genial a sense of fun. The man is reflected in his style, colloquial, often incorrect, but extraordinarily flexible, in response to every change of mood from irrepressible gaiety to sombre melancholy, capable of rising to passionate eloquence, as in certain passages in *Vanity Fair* and *Esmond*, of falling to cadences of an exquisite loveliness, as it does now and again in *The Great Hoggarty Diamond*, *The Newcomes*, *Denis Duval*, and *The Roundabout Papers*.

The height of genius touched in Dickens and Thackeray is only very occasionally attained in any of the other novelists. Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, Charlotte's *Jane Eyre* and *Villette*, show original genius of a very high order; but none of the Brontës were able to get outside the narrowness of their own experience; their limitations were too serious to allow of their ranking among the greatest novelists. Again, there are fine things in *Adam Bede*, *The Mill on the Floss* and *Silas Marner*, but in the main George Eliot was too self-conscious, too lacking in a true sense of humour—creator of Mrs. Poyser and other humorous characters as she was—to rank in the first flight of novelists.<sup>1</sup> Others like her, though their work as a whole was not of the very highest quality, produced isolated novels of the first order. There may be instanced, Charles Reade's *The Cloister and the Hearth*, Trollope's *Barchester Towers*, Kingsley's *Westward Ho*, Blackmore's *Lorna Doone*, and Shorthouse's *John Inglesant*.

Three outstanding figures belong to the latter part of the Victorian era—Stevenson, who is nowadays ranked too low, whose *Treasure Island*, and *Weir of Hermiston*, and probably others are certainly destined to immortality,

because the genuine spirit of romance was in him ; Thomas Hardy, whose series of often sombre Wessex Tales at times reach a tragic intensity reminiscent of the Greek tragedians as in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, *The Mayor of Casterbridge* and, most of all, in *The Return of the Native* ; George Meredith who is only prevented by a wilful obscurity, an occasional (almost grotesque) verbosity and a curious tendency to stray all of a sudden into an odd world of improbability and caricature, from ranking among our very greatest novelists, and who in *Richard Feverel*, *Evan Harrington*, *Vittoria*, *Harry Richmond*, *The Egoist* and *Diana of the Crossways* combined power and characterisation, subtlety of thought, and much beauty of writing and genuine pathos with those ideals of comedy which he himself expounded in his essay on the Comic Spirit.

From Scott and Jane Austen to Meredith and Hardy, is not only the most prolific but also certainly the most brilliant period in the history of our prose fiction. But inevitably with an astonishing quantity of work of supreme excellence there has also gone a prodigious output of very ephemeral and indifferent tales, catering to the feebler intelligences in that vast novel-reading public brought together by the cheapening of the press, which is one of the most revolutionary phenomena of the nineteenth century.

There have of late been predictions that the pre-eminence of the novel was not going to prove an abiding feature of our literary history and suggestions that it was in process of losing its hold on the popular mind, the place to be taken by some new art form. But, if the contemporary novel has not the same authority that it enjoyed in mid-Victorian days, that is simply because there are not at the

moment among novelists personalities of quite the same eminence as in the days of Dickens and Thackeray ; and the popularity of the novel is still enormous. It is not to-day in its style the lineal decendent of the novel of Jane Austen, Thackeray, and George Eliot. Its inspiration is apt to be drawn less from native than from French and Russian sources. Two characteristics it has in common with Victorian fiction—its pre-occupation with questions of social reform, the social question sometimes becoming the core of the whole book, as in Mr. John Galsworthy, and the didactic tendency, shown so markedly by Mr. H. G. Wells that the novelist is apt to be swallowed up in the preacher, and the story lost in a maze of propaganda. But the contrasts are more noteworthy than the resemblances. The old conviction, robustness, geniality, distinctly moral atmosphere are seldom seen and are apt to be despised. The atmosphere is not immoral but is un-moral ; the author likes to adopt an attitude of strict neutrality towards his characters ; that is felt to be the duty of the sincere artist. There is apt to be a pervading cynicism, doubt, discontent—rather grey and unhappy in the realism of Mr. George Moore and in such writers as Mr. Arnold Bennett, Mr. Gilbert Cannan, Mr. W. L. George, and Mr. Compton MacKenzie. At times too in recent fiction the Zolaesque influence has been very apparent in the predilection shown for the sordid and impure. There is a nobler and more inspiring quality in the books of Mr. Joseph Conrad, which are not merely unhappy but genuinely tragic in depicting the greatness of men battling with the hostile might of circumstance or fate ; and in them reality is combined with a high romance, cast by the magic of the sea and the richness and mystery, of the East. May we not hope that romance will come into

her own again and that in the novel of the near future there may be reflected, not only the horror of a world catastrophe and the feverish troubled questioning of a period of painful dislocation and fateful transition, but also the human grandeur that has been revealed among countless men and women in the midst of death and agony and the strong faith and courage with which a portentous future must be faced, a future full of unknown perils no doubt, but having locked within it a promise of "a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God"?

The revival of poetry in recent years after a short period of comparative neglect is chiefly gratifying inasmuch as it is a revival of poetry reading. The poetry produced in these Georgian years has not been really very remarkable. Together with Kipling, Francis Thompson, W. B. Yeats, the Poet Laureate, Miss Alice Meynell, and Mr. William Watson there has been a distinct school of new poets, whose verses were first brought before the eye of a large public by their inclusion together in an anthology of Georgian poetry. They are apt to be rather self-conscious, rather exotic, and have often eccentricity rather than beauty and strength as their chief characteristic. It is doubtful if any of the newer poets save Mr. Masefield and Rupert Brooke have a prospect of being long remembered; and the poetry directly inspired by the war has gained from the circumstances of its origin an attention hardly warranted by its intrinsic excellence.

Another very gratifying revival was that of the English drama within the last thirty years and more especially in the ten years before the war, which killed the drama in favour of revue. There have been some who, in the popularity of the revue and the immense popularity of the

“picture palace,” discern the death knell of the drama. But the cult of revue is only a passing phase; and the cinema, which has certainly come to stay, caters to a large extent for a public that has never gone and never will go to the play. It is likely that after a brief period of suspended animation the new movement in the English theatre will resume its advance. The nineteenth century down to its latest years was a notable period in the history of the English stage, but not of its drama. At its outset playgoers were witnessing the acting of Mrs. Siddons, Mrs. Jordan, Kemble; in 1830 and thereabouts they saw Edmund Kean, Macready, and Helen Faucit. Between 1844 and 1862 Phelps was carrying on a repertory of classical plays at Sadlers Wells. In the sixties flourished the queen of burlesque, Marie Wilton and her husband Sir Squire Bancroft; then the Kendals and John Hare. The seventies brought Henry Irving into prominence and in 1878 he started the management of the Lyceum with Miss Ellen Terry, the first of the long string of actor-managers of whom Sir Herbert Tree, Sir George Alexander, and Sir Charles Wyndham have been the most notable. But in all these years, 1800 to 1890, there was practically no original English drama of note, none more notable than Browning's *A Blot in the Scutcheon*, which was a failure on the stage, Reade's *Masks and Faces*, T. W. Robertson's *Caste*. The revival came in an extraordinary degree from the influence of Ibsen, first acted in England in 1888. With all the force of a new discovery came the realisation of the dramatic value of a serious purpose, a central idea, psychological characterisation, fidelity to life avoiding on the one hand conventionality, on the other burlesque, and closeness and care of construction. Sir Arthur Pinero was the most distinguished playwright of the Ibsenite

school. An advance on the Pinero school, because they were free from a certain staginess of situation and stiltedness of dialogue discernable in their predecessors, came with the appearance of the younger dramatists, whose temple was pre-eminently the Court Theatre under the Vedrenne-Barker management. They were able men, and included among them, in Mr. Bernard Shaw, was one genius who will hold a permanent place in the history of English playwriting. With the Court is to be bracketed the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, which produced the remarkable plays of W. B. Yeats and J. M. Synge. Standing by himself is Sir J. M. Barrie, whose tenderness and whimsicality have endeared him not only to children but to all others who have a strong disinclination to "grow up."

The history of English music in the century is somewhat analogous to that of the drama. At the beginning of the period, music meant for a large proportion of musical people a young lady's amiable drawing-room accomplishment. Otherwise, Oratorio being much the most popular form of music in the country generally, it meant mostly Handel. The Birmingham Festival, founded in 1768, produced little other till 1802 when Haydn's *The Creation* was performed. In 1837 Mendelssohn's *St. Paul* was given, the composer himself conducting. At the beginning of the century Choral music had no rival in popularity. But the formation of the Philharmonic Society in 1813 is an indication of growing interest in purely orchestral music. In 1816 this Society gave the first rendering in England of Beethoven's C Minor Symphony and in 1825 of his Choral Symphony.

At the beginning of the period opera was almost entirely Italian—the opera of Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti, and early Verdi, as sung by Mario and Grisi. It meant

Jenny Lind, in the early days of Victoria ; while in the sixties it meant Titiens. Through the days of Patti, of Tamagno down to those of Melba and Caruso it has always meant to a large number of people little more than the virtuoso's voice. On the other hand the modern Wagnerian opera-drama idea, in which the individual singer is severely subordinated to the unity of the whole, has tended to break down this conception. An attempt to create a really rational interest in opera produced such native works as *The Bohemian Girl*, first performed in 1843, *Maritana* and *The Lily of Killarney*, not works of a high order. More important was the creation of the travelling company giving opera in English to provincial audiences, the first being the Carl Rosa Company, established in 1875. The beginning of the D'Oyley Carte management, producing the comic operas of Gilbert and Sullivan, was really a much more notable event because, light as they are, these are the most important as they are much the most distinctive English contribution to opera. There have been more ambitious and much more solemn attempts since, but they have been not nearly so genuinely significant. Greater catholicity of taste in opera came in the seventies. In 1870, *The Flying Dutchman*, having first been produced in 1843, had its first performance in England. Similarly *Tannhäuser* took thirty-one years to reach England. On the other hand, *The Ring*, having been first produced in its entirety at Bayreuth in 1876, was given also in its entirety in London in 1882.

During nearly the whole century Church music was almost unmitigatedly bad. In hosts of parish churches half-trained choirs, which with an egregious bad taste aped those of cathedrals, sang to the conventional strains of Walmisley, Barnby, Dykes, and Stainer. Something

much superior was introduced with the scholarship of Sir Hubert Parry and Sir Charles Villiers Stanford. Of very recent years there has been a most notable regeneration—seen in the revival of modal music, of plainsong, the use of great music of the past, such as the Masses of Palestrina and Allegri, the successful attempt at the reformation of the hymnary in *The English Hymnal*.

The revival in church music has only been one feature in a remarkable advance, dating from about 1890, towards higher and much more catholic tastes, much more widely diffused throughout the community. The programmes of the promenade concerts at the Queen's Hall, which were started in 1895, are most eloquent evidence of this advance. The "popular" programme to-day is more advanced than the "classical" programme of the early days. Another notable illustration has been the forming of numerous new orchestras, from that of the Scottish Orchestra in 1891 to that of the New Symphony Orchestra in 1908. Perhaps even more notable is the formation of a number of new string quartets within the same period: while the selection of Saturday afternoons for their concerts, such as was recently made by the London String Quartet, is a sign of an interest in Chamber music such as did not exist thirty years ago. There may also be instanced the success of Sir T. Beecham's operatic crusade; the undoubted appeal of Slavonic music, which first became popular in the nineties and which now means not only Tschaikowsky's *Pathetic* symphony and his rather blatant overture '1812,' but the strange developments of Moussorgsky and Stravinsky; the appeal also of such elusive music as that of Debussy and Ravel. There should be mentioned too the interest taken in the rediscovery of old English music, with which the name of Mr. Cecil

Sharpe is associated ; perhaps most notable of all the interest in Bach, under the inspiration and guidance of Sir H. P. Allen, and as shown in the revival of his *Passion Music* and other oratorios in St. Paul's and other London churches. The most notable development has been that of a large music-loving public ; but this later period has also brought forth native composers of greater distinction and originality than any in the previous century, the greatest of them Sir Edward Elgar.

Painting, at the commencement of the nineteenth century, no doubt suggested to the ordinary man mainly the portraits of Reynolds and Gainsborough ; but it should have suggested also the water-colours of David Cox and the rarely beautiful landscapes of Constable. There was plenty of bad art too—as in the huge, pretentious and ugly canvasses of Etty. A revolution came with the advent of a great genius—the greatest in the history of English art—Turner, gifted with a most astonishing imagination, a genius for colour and light effects and a sovereign contempt for the slavish reproduction of the superficially obvious in nature. In 1839 appeared his most famous picture *The Fighting Temeraire* ; in 1843 was published the first volume of Ruskin's *Modern Painters* in which the new genius was acclaimed, in which the landscape school of Poussin and Salvator Rosa was decried and the combination of imaginativeness with truth to nature contrasted with fancifulness and falsehood. The cry “ go back to nature,” abandoning the imitation, the slavish worship of masters, however great, was the cry of the Pre-Raphaelites in their crusade against conventionality in thought and treatment. In 1848 the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was founded by Holman Hunt, Millais, and Rossetti. The most ardent of the rebels was Ford Madox Brown, who

had been much influenced by this sort of movement on the Continent; later, under the same general influence, came Burne-Jones. But the greatest name of the school is that of G. F. Watts, after Turner and Constable the greatest English painter of the century. The most notable feature of art since the days of the Pre-Raphaelites both in Great Britain and the rest of Europe, has been the appearance of one unorthodox school after another, who have sought to create the maximum of effect with the greatest economy of means. In 1863 a *Salon des Refusés* was founded in Paris and Manet and other impressionists exhibited in it. The same year the greatest of English impressionists, Whistler, produced his *Symphony in White*. Since his day we have had post-impressionists and futurists and cubists, the latter being particularly freakish and having no interest in beauty whatsoever. It is not likely that such methods will prove more than a passing phase, but there should undoubtedly be noted as a significant fact the popularity in the last twenty years or so of the bizarre, the grotesque, the barbarous—a distinct sensationalism. Interest in Cubism, in art such as that of Bakst, in the crude and repellent is, with the popularity of uncouth forms of dancing and the picture palace, only another sign of a tendency to find enjoyment in that which appeals to the senses forcibly, violently, on the instant and calls for no thought or reflection to appreciate it.

Not even the shortest outline of British art in the nineteenth century and after should omit mention of the foundation of the great picture galleries, of the National Gallery in 1838, of the Portrait Gallery in 1856, the Tate in 1897, the opening of the Wallace collection to the public in 1900, the opening of a number of provincial galleries. The work of several important societies should also be

noted, of the Arundel, and the Medici, and the Pastel Societies. The last had been formed in 1880, languished owing to the lack of popular support until 1899, since when, reconstituted, it has flourished. The Black and White work of the great *Punch* artists, will hold a permanent place—at all events that of Leech, Tenniel, and Frederick Walker. It has indeed been through the illustrations in books and papers rather than through picture galleries, that art has had most influence on the general public : and in this connection the very extensive developments of illustration in the century have had great importance—first by means of lithography, next by wood-engraving and thirdly by means of artistic photography, the last being the most potent influence of all. The year 1851 saw the real birth of photography in the use of negatives on glass plates exposed in the camera. The Royal Photographic Society was founded in 1853, making its first exhibition a year or two later. The Photographic Salon held its first exhibition in 1894. In 1904 colour-photography was first introduced.

It must be sufficient simply to mention the names of the one or two really outstanding sculptors of the century—at its beginning Flaxman and the great Chantrey ; between 1818 and 1875 Alfred Stevens, whose monument of Wellington in St. Paul's was designed in 1856 ; Richard Westmacott, the sculptor of the pediment of the British Museum ; his son who designed the pediment of the Royal Exchange, Watts if only for his *Physical Energy* in Kensington Gardens, and of to-day Sir H. Thornycroft and Sir George Frampton.

The architecture of the early nineteenth century was very bad on the whole. Georgian wood-work had been good but its stone bad ; and the age that produced the

crinoline and other such atrocities in dress revealed similar execrable ill-taste in other directions, notably in furniture and decoration. The best work of the period was that of Sir John Soane, the architect of the Bank of England and the Dulwich Gallery. A revival was started before 1840, when an era of study of both Classical and Gothic models began, the latter being much assisted by the influence of Literature. First fruits of the Gothic revival were the Houses of Parliament, the magnificent work of Barry and Pugin ; first fruits of the Classical revival St. George's Hall in Liverpool, designed by H. L. Elmes. The Great Exhibition in 1851 had a valuable effect in raising many of the minor arts into prominence, such as mosaic, metal and glass work ; and a sign of the new interest was the formation of the South Kensington Museum.

Generally speaking, a tendency in Architecture from the middle of the last century to the present day has been to use the Classical style for public buildings, Gothic for churches, the Queen Anne style or free classical for private houses. The most prominent name is that of the now much abused Sir Gilbert Scott, who was responsible for the Albert Memorial, St. Pancras Station, and St. Mary Abbotts, Kensington. Other outstanding names were those of W. Butterfield and Mr. J. R. Pearson, church-architects, Mr. G. S. Street, the architect of the Law Courts, Mr. J. F. Bentley, author of the Byzantine experiment of the Roman Catholic Cathedral at Westminster. Fine work is being done to-day by several very distinguished architects. The most inspired conception of the day is that of Liverpool Cathedral, a building designed on an august and ambitious plan. But the two most encouraging features of the present situation in architecture are first the excellence of much

modern business architecture, the fine use made of the straight lines obtained with the use of steel frames and concrete ; and secondly the fact that the careful scholarly study of Gothic and Classical models is now producing no mere imitation ; there is an original element in all the best contemporary work. Accompanying the revival in architecture has been a most marked improvement in taste in furniture and decoration. The styles of Adams, Sheraton, and Chippendale are no longer the eccentric liking of the few, but a popular liking.

In the vast fields of knowledge and inquiry to which we loosely give the name Science the period of the nineteenth century and after is very easily pre-eminent over all previous eras. It has been a common occurrence in such branches of learning for more to be accomplished in a year or two than in all the previous history of mankind. Our theoretical knowledge of the universe—small as it may yet be in comparison with what remains to be learned—is enormously greater than it was a hundred years ago. We know immensely more about the composition, structure and surface of the earth and the forces in it ; and we have been learning how to apply this theoretical knowledge to human use. Not only have the old branches of science been changed out of all knowledge, but new branches have been added. Where previously we trusted to guesswork and intuition, we now possess the material for positive knowledge. The rules and methods of scientific inquiry are being applied to one new sphere after another.

The two branches of Science in which the most astounding advance has been made have been Biology and Physics. Based upon the study of Botany and Comparative Anatomy are the postulates of the science of the laws of life in the plant creation and the animal world. The

great theories of evolution and of natural selection, all the teaching of Charles Lyell, Huxley, Spencer, Charles Darwin, Russel Wallace have altered our whole conception of, and attitude to, the universe. In really an astonishingly short space of time views which appealed to many contemporaries as incredible, shocking, irreligious have since become adopted as part of the general knowledge of the community, have become absorbed in popular parlance, are accepted as demonstrable truths, incontestable by the most orthodox. The great developments of the broad general science of biology has involved a close investigation of certain specialised departments of it, in the ancillary science of palaeontology, embryology, and the study of heredity as a phenomenon in all kinds of life. The inspiration of biology is also clear in the new science of anthropology, concerned principally with early man, sociology, inquiring into the laws that govern the associated life of men, most recent of all eugenics, which has the practical end in view—the improvement of the race on scientific principles.

In Chemistry and Physics at the beginning of the nineteenth century positive knowledge had been achieved of the composition of air and water, minerals and the materials of the organic world. But this was qualitative knowledge only, and the importance of the element of quantity had not yet been grasped. A most important book, published in 1808, was John Dalton's *Chemical Philosophy*, in which the atomic theory of the Ancient Ionian philosopher Democritus was revived in a modern form. In 1834 Faraday's enunciation of the laws of Electrolysis brought out quantitative connection between electricity and chemical action. The epoch-making discoveries of Chemistry, which have revolutionised the

entire science, and enormously affected Physics, have been the discovery of radium, the work of the Curies and of Lord Rayleigh and Sir William Ramsay in England, and of the electron. So far from the atom proving to be the smallest unit in matter, it is now known that the unit is infinitely smaller ; and some physicists now discuss the possibility of the sub-electron.

The first great feature of Science in the past century has been, in these different directions, a marvellous increase in our theoretical knowledge both in extent and in importance—far more exhaustive treatment of old branches of inquiry and the addition of new branches, the elucidation of laws of life and principles of development and the discovery of new forces in our world. The second feature has been the application of theoretical knowledge to the most practical purposes.

First of all, in Medicine. There is no more honourable page in the history of the period than that of the efforts of the medical profession—physicians, surgeons, nurses, for the relief of suffering, the cure, and, still more important, the prevention of disease. These efforts have taken the form of not only the most patient painstaking research, but of much personal courage and self-sacrifice in many cases. The two most conspicuous names in the story of the science of medicine in the nineteenth century are those of Pasteur and Koch. But only second to these are those of two Englishmen, Sir James Simpson and Lord Lister. They are the creators of modern surgery, the first by his crusade in favour of the use of anæsthetics for operations, the latter for his application of Pasteur's discoveries to the treatment of wounds, *i.e.* the introduction of the antiseptic system. Ether was first used in 1846, Chloroform in 1847, and Cocaine in 1884. Lister introduced

antiseptic surgery in the Glasgow Infirmary in 1865. The name of Simpson is to be held in honour not only for his advocacy of anæsthetics, but for hospital reform—in respect to construction, ventilation, and management. At the same time there has been a wonderful change in the character and status of nurses, their selection and training. Mrs. Gamp and Betsy Prigg are caricatures, but unhappily they are caricatures of a reality, not—as ought to have been the case—just monsters of the imagination. Now the nurse stands as one of the most beneficent, one of the most honoured and universally beloved of human figures. A discovery scarcely inferior in importance to the introduction of anæsthetics and antiseptic surgery has been that of the Röntgen rays in 1896, and the work in that connection, of Sir William Crookes, whose tube has made the accidental discovery of Röntgen rays practically useful to the world. Great progress has been made in battling with diseases from our knowledge of their causes, especially from the development of the science of Bacteriology. The battle with disease has been carried on not only at home, but in our tropical possessions, against cholera, sleeping-sickness, and other tropical diseases, much of this work having been done under the auspices of Sir Ronald Ross. There are now very important special Schools of Tropical Medicine in the Universities of London and Liverpool. The method by which disease has been fought at home and abroad has been, above all, sanitation. Both the idea and the reality have been so much more developed in the last century than ever before in the world's history that they may be said to have been peculiarly its own work. The doctors have been able to wield their authority, have captured government and public opinion in the essential pursuit of

cleanliness and healthy conditions among the community. Cleanliness is now recognised as a personal duty, a municipal duty, a state duty. It is recognised that congested areas are inimical to the interests of society, not only because of the social evils they generate, but because they do not allow of each individual having the cubic space of air desirable for his health. In a word we have won through to the conception of Public Health, and a Ministry of Health is but the necessary coping stone of an edifice already erected by the influence of medical science. Another very important conception of Public Health is the great interest nowadays shown in maternity, in the care of babies and child welfare.

The application of science to practical life—in the sphere of mechanical invention is both one of the wonders of the age and at the same time one of its most obvious features in the popular mind ; for such wonders are plain to every eye to see in days of wireless telegraphy, the conquest of the air, the use of electricity for power as well as for light. One invention has followed another in such paths of advance with a bewildering rapidity, and already the great practical devices—which made Lord Kelvin famous—such as his Mariner's Compass, in which small needles and a light compass card were used, and his submarine telegraphy, are taken completely for granted and their wonder forgotten in the greater glory of subsequent discoveries. In the field of practical science the advance has not only been great and rapid, but it has been at an ever-increasing rapidity. Through its agency the whole world has been changed, not only in its outer aspect, but very largely also in its character during the years since Waterloo. Telegraphy, telephony, and electric locomotion, by land, by sea, by air, are all devices for

annihilating distance and making the whole world more compact. Industry has been largely affected by the scientific revolution, not only through the invention of many time and labour-saving appliances, but through the initiation of new methods of work and new industries. Chemistry has made scientific agriculture possible by means of chemical manures and created the aniline dye industry by means of coal-tar dyes. It should be remembered that the honour of having discovered the first dyes belongs to an Englishman, Perkins. Much, altogether, has been done in these last hundred years in Great Britain in the directions of applying the scientific knowledge of the laboratory to the sphere of the practical worker. But we were in this respect being outstripped fast prior to the War by Germany, whose universities were being utilised to a greater extent than ours were, to foster the economic productivity of the country. To remedy this, an organisation was set up during the War under the Privy Council to encourage the application of science to industry. Unhappily during the last few years Science has been deflected from the domain of production to that of destruction, and her tremendous potency in our modern world terribly demonstrated by the horrible efficiency of the implements she has forged for the hand of man to use for purposes of bloodshed and havoc.

The third great feature in the history of Science in the past century has been the triumph of the scientific spirit, the spirit of unfettered inquiry, which alone has made the theoretical discoveries and practical inventions possible. The advance of Science has been hampered in most ages of human history by the innate conservatism of the human race, armed with the sanction of authority, of secular ruler or priestly caste. The power of apathy, the power of superstition, hatred or fear of the unknown, of the

new idea have had to be overcome. Ever the multitude has been timid, courage been only with the small minority, who have been gifted with imagination, curiosity and the compelling desire to lift more and more the veil of the unknown, believing that there is no subject in heaven and earth that ought not to be investigated, that liberty of thought, expression and discussion is essential in the interest of all human progress. There have been obstacles and restrictions in these last hundred years—religious diffidence, blasphemy laws, various censorships of one kind and another—there are obstacles and restrictions still: but in the main, the principle of liberty of thought, the prime essential for scientific and intellectual progress, was definitely won—great progress to that end having been made in the eighteenth and in the nineteenth centuries. In this respect no country has had a worthier record than our own, in which the principle of Intellectual Liberty has again and again been proclaimed from the days of Roger Bacon to those of Milton, and from the days of Milton to those of Mill. We live in days of restrictions, an age of state interference, in which the individual is continually being asked or compelled to subordinate himself to the general will. There is one sphere, however, on which the state must not encroach, on which it now recognises that it cannot do so without injuring the health of the body politic as well as prejudicing the general advance of the human race—the sphere of intellectual freedom. There is nothing more unhealthy than acquiescence in intellectual mediocrity, nothing more enfeebling to the body politic than the “herd mind.” While politically the tendency of the age has been clearly and strongly anti-individualist, in the realm of thought it is still an age of individualism, of enmity to all authority within its own domain, of faith in an unbounded liberty.

## CHAPTER XV

### CONCLUSION

INDUSTRIALISM, with its huge factories and new urban areas changing the very face of nature, as human hands had never changed it before, has been the most distinctive feature of the past century. Science, harnessing the forces of nature for human service, and, applied to industry, making possible production on a vast scale, has increased the amenities of life and the accumulation of wealth in a way hitherto undreamed of. Commercial enterprise, stimulated by these developments, has penetrated into the remotest corners of the globe and knit the whole world closer in bands of economic dependence. In the mere size and diversity of human activities there has been a marvellous expansion; in material prosperity extraordinary progress. The achievements of the period have not been material only. There has been a great advance in human knowledge and a great increase in its diffusion; there has been a luxuriant literary and artistic output, comparable with that of the greatest of former epochs.

But there is a dark side to the picture. The immense accumulation of wealth has been accompanied by a glaring inequality in its distribution, and social problems have been intensified. If the worst evils attendant on the Industrial Revolution have been removed, there has remained the mental, moral and physical injury due to the great influx of population from the country into crowded towns, and to the deadening monotony of many kinds of manual labour and, more particularly, of mere machine-tending. Discord in the community has latterly grown, and there has been a marked tendency to have recourse to lawless and violent methods. A period abundant in material

success, still richer in promise, closed in a terrible cataclysm, an apotheosis of barbarism, which suggested that our boasted civilisation was merely a veneer, and that the nineteenth century's idea of progress was but a pathetic fallacy.

There were many who saw in the Great War the means to a moral uplifting, who expected it to bring an end and a solution to all the evils wherewith Europe was afflicted. For such there has been little but disappointment. Before the German question was over the Russian question had begun. The setting up of the new international machinery, the League of Nations, was coincident with the outburst of the rivalries of newly established states, whose territorial ambitions seemed at times to clash hopelessly. Wars did not cease ; they multiplied. The serious economic disturbances, which were the inevitable consequences of a protracted conflict, the fall in the value of money, diminishing production, the greatly increased cost of living, exacerbated the conflict of Capital and Labour, and encouraged the view that nothing short of a catastrophic reshaping of our economic and social system was called for. The conceptions that meant so much to the nineteenth century—Liberty, Democracy, Nationality—do not pass unchallenged to-day. The optimistic self-assurance of the Victorian era has gone ; a rather weary disillusionment has taken its place. To the Utilitarian's confidence in the capacity of the human intellect to solve all political problems by a patient process of ameliorative evolution has succeeded a distinct anti-intellectualism, an impatience with the necessarily slow operation of appealing to the reason, a predilection for the more drastic methods of direct action. It is clear that the guiding principles of the past era cannot, unless restated in a language more expressive of present needs, be the inspiration of the next. A new gospel, a new organisation of society may be

necessary in order to evolve a Renaissance out of the *Sturm und Drang* of the present time.

It is seldom indeed that men and women are so conscious of the distinctiveness of their own epoch as the great events of the past few years have caused our own generation to be. Such consciousness does not make the present any the less an enigma, which only a distant future can hope fully to comprehend. But at least we can be clear about one or two essential things. We can be sure of certain fundamental characteristics of our country's heritage, which are the foundation of the British Commonwealth as it now exists—the conceptions of equality before the law, of self-government, of toleration. So also we can be clear about certain tendencies of our own day, in themselves neither good nor bad, but dependent for their results upon the spirit with which they are pursued. There is a restlessness of mind, suspicious of tradition and authority, which may prove either barrenly anarchic or an educative, revitalising force; there is the increasing self-consciousness of the economic group, which is liable to prove purely disruptive of a more catholic unity or which may, on the other hand, actually promote unity by emphasising the fact that in each and every department of interest and activity the individual belongs to the community, that rights are social, not personal; there is the outstanding feature of state-control in many different spheres of the national life, apt to mean the unimaginative routine of a dilatory officialdom, apt to impinge upon the individual's freedom and to discourage self-reliance and independence of character, on the other hand expressive of the corporate character of political society and a possible means to the securing of a higher standard of living for the whole people, and a more equitable distribution of wealth, leisure and the means to happiness.

The ultimate aims of social and international reconstruction are never new ; they are the same ideals of peace, brotherhood, and charity, which have been the cornerstones of every Utopia, they are embedded deep in the moral consciousness. All practical schemes which seek to embody such aspirations are beset by powerful obstacles and are slow of attainment. As it is out of the moral consciousness that they arise, so it is only by the deepening and diffusion of such consciousness throughout the body politic that they can ever be achieved.

The problems that confront us in domestic and international affairs are indeed new in the sense of being vaster in scope and consequence than before, but they are not new in their essential character. In days when there is a disposition to contemn origins and to focus attention on the immediate exigencies of a situation, there is need to suggest that the great events of our days prove not the unimportance of history, but its immense significance. Millions of men and women of this generation have been involved in bloodshed, destruction and suffering for causes which take us into a very distant past. All the perplexities of Europe for a century and more were interwoven into the Great War. We speak much of rebuilding. There are some who would first entirely destroy. But it is not by utterly discarding all the achievements of the past that the great cities of mankind, if they are to have strength and beauty in them, can best be constructed. The hopes, the ideals, the efforts of our forefathers are not dead refuse to be cast aside ; traditions, moulded by the stress of centuries, may yet be instinct with life. A very different type of edifice may be demanded by future needs ; but it is upon such firm foundations that we can best hope to build a city that shall survive, and in which the wants of its people may be satisfied.

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